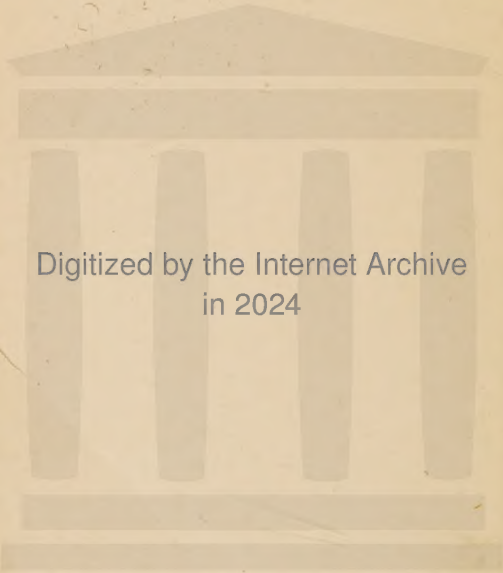




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THE DIVERSIONS
OF A
BOOKWORM.

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THE DIVERSIONS
OF A
BOOK-WORM.

BY
J. ROGERS REES,
AUTHOR OF
"THE PLEASURES OF A BOOK-WORM," ETC.

"My choicest entertainment I find in a corner with a book."

LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1886.

To
ALEXANDER IRELAND,
WHOSE KNOWLEDGE OF BOOKS
IS SURPASSED ONLY
BY HIS
KINDLINESS OF HEART,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME
Is Inscribed.



CONTENTS.



	PAGE
THE BOOKWORM'S STUDY - - -	I
SOME OTHER FOLKS' STUDIES - -	25
AN IDEAL STUDY - - -	83
THE COMPANIONS OF THE BOOKWORM :	
FRIENDS IN THE FLESH - - -	106
OTHER COMPANIONS OF THE BOOKWORM :	
DREAMS AND BOOKS - - -	156
THE LOVED BOOKS OF SOME OTHER FOLKS	214
APPENDIX - - - - -	245





THE BOOKWORM'S STUDY.

I.

THE Fates have forbidden me to look to literature as a life-work, and I am content ; for if the truth will out, I have always considered this matter as did Washington Irving, cordially agreeing with him that " literature and the elegant arts must grow up side by side with the coarser plants of daily necessity ; and must depend for their culture, not on the exclusive devotion of time and wealth, nor the quickening rays of titled patronage, but on hours and seasons snatched from the pursuit of worldly interests by intelligent and public-spirited individuals." My life continues a duality—now crammed

with the plain practicality of pounds, shillings, and pence ; anon " full of sweet dreams " and " quiet breathings." During the broad glare of sunlight my attention is wholly given to the affairs of the commercial world ; but when the softened light of evening creeps on apace, the press of busy shoulders is unfelt in the sweet companionship of books—loved friends, who being dead yet speak with words that charm, and lead, and help one to forget.

From this it may be gathered that my dreams are, at least, not morbid ; that my life is qualified sufficiently by the actual to preserve it from rust ; and that if occasionally the memory of a broad expanse of sunlit sea does intrude, its harm is not very serious if it only leads one to declare that, at least, he will be buried where nature rests under the kiss of the westerly sea-breeze.

But of my day-dreams, what exists and what should exist are strangely mingled in them, as may be gleaned from what is written in these pages. Even in building up, in imagination, a book-lover's "holiest of holies," I cannot fail to remember, nor should I like to forget, the little corners that have been sacred to the men who yet live with us in our best hours of rest and seclusion. Wrapped in the cosiness of our inner life, our quiet pleasure is enhanced by remembering what similar cosiness has been enjoyed in the past, or is being enjoyed in the present, by those whose expressed thoughts and revealed dreams are to us so many assurances that our deepest seclusion is but a withdrawal from mere acquaintances that truest friendships may be reached and understood and enjoyed. If a man spends his days in the world of business, the hours of the morning and evening are too sacred to be

wasted on trivialities, either of companionship or occupation. *'Tis the season given him by the All-wise Giver of Good in which to live his life and dream his dreams.* In the multitude of conflicting interests which just now whirl a man along in his daily struggle for existence, it is surely something gained to practically appreciate the truth of Matthew Arnold's lines :

“Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery !”

Ah! to find ourselves and to be ourselves, if only for a brief season, is no mean luxury. And where can this finding and being occur but in a true man's home, the sweetest, the fairest, the most romantic place in life, where all that is best and brightest shines with steady and purest lustre, and where all that is strong and great in a man finds encouragement and growth?

In busy days, followed by pleasant

evenings in the study, I am content to live. As sometimes no uncommon pleasure is culled from the most ordinary surroundings, so the mere fact that the house in which I live in the heart of this busy town is an old one and has a history, helps me to look upon existence as not altogether glaring or divorced from romance. A man may surround himself with an atmosphere of fiction spun out of his own brain, and existing only for himself, if he cannot find it already manufactured and at hand.

Only consider for a moment the charms which linger round an old house. The very uncertainty in which its past is enveloped is favourable to the dreamer, especially if the building has stood, as this one has, untouched by modern improvements, conscious of its own old-fashioned comfort, while the busy march of commercial progress has reared all round it showy

structures of questionable stability. Here, as I sit of an evening, I often summon its past occupants from out their shadowy hiding-places. Some of their names are on record; now and then an old inhabitant recollects who they were, what they looked like, how they lived, and where they worshipped. The roughness of the rub-in of these figure-pictures favours their reconstruction through imagination. The little known about their outer life interferes in no way with the daily inner life which here, in my seclusion, I now live over again with these folk. And after all, they were but fragments of humanity; and sorrow and pleasure, mingled with uncertainty and disappointment, were in their days what they are in ours. The merry ring of wedding-bells brought joy then as now; and the finger of death was cold in the past as it is in the present. Were those who sat and moved in

these rooms Puritans in their thoughts and lives? If so, what pictures did they have upon these walls? Were they fond of the merry round of social life? If so, what were the prayers they breathed at eventide with knees pressed upon these floors? Did they thank God for the prattle of children's voices about them in the sunny days of summer; or did they, in gloomy composure, live on year after year in a self-absorbed existence? The answers I frame to fit these questions must remain mine. They are part of the life I live in this old house; and, moreover, they could by no possibility interest my readers.

Then the old garden in which the house stands has existed as such for a century and a half, and is a sweet spot to linger in. It is no modern grass-plot closely shaven, and dignified with the title of lawn. Old trees, which laugh at the measurement of your

arms round their trunks, are numerous here; the walls are high, forbidding the impertinent intrusion of neighbours' prying, and are covered with a plentiful growth of ivy. Here the birds build and make the air melodious with their song.

As I pretend to no great skill as a gardener, portions of the garden are allowed to run wild; but the very wilderness they shape for themselves makes the trimness of other gardens appear paltry and forbidding. The flowers are mostly old-fashioned perennials* which live through storm and fair weather, bending and lifting their heads alternately as the blast or the sunshine visits them.

This, then, is what my study-window immediately looks out upon, while away in the distance one just catches

* Hawthorne's favourites were sunflowers and hollyhocks; and his son remembers how he used to stand, with his hands behind his back, contemplating the great dignified plants.

a glimpse of one of the Welsh hills. And that very hill has become a friend, and necessary to the comfortable feeling of life. It, however, answers another purpose for the younger portions of our family, who come in the morning to consult me regarding the weather. The statement I get placed before me with its accompanying interrogation generally runs :

“The hill looks quite near this morning, papa; do you think we shall have rain?”

The room in which no inconsiderable portion of my life is spent, opens out, as I have said, upon this old garden. And, although I am chary of admitting to it strangers in the flesh, you, my gentle reader, may now peep in upon it through the open door; for if you are to follow me through the pages of this little volume, now busy with me and my books; now sharing my dreams; now taking part

in the conversation of near friends, you should, I think, be able to "place yourself." You see there is nothing very particular about it or in it.

"But it is comfortable," you say.

"True."

You peep again, and substitute the word "cosy" for your previous "comfortable;" and I admit that your second description is the more just of the two.

"Your chairs are comfortable, your rug looks warm, and your slippers appear as friendly as the pipe I see by the side of your pen on the table."

Continue, my friend, satisfy yourself now, for, remember, visits into this odd corner of the house are rarely indulged in by acquaintances, and only sometimes by friends.

"You have plenty of books, a few busts,—Ah! one of Carlyle there, in a niche above the piano, surrounded by the seven etchings of the Chelsea

Sage. Permit me to look more closely at it, especially as I have failed to procure one myself."

"Certainly."

And as you look at it, remarking its beauty as a work of art, and its truthfulness as a likeness, I stand at the door and gaze wistfully at the broad line of purple in the west, thinking sorrowfully of the young artist-friend whose last work on earth had been that "labour of love."

The pictures which strike you as being in harmony with my nook are, I see, copies of Sir Walter Scott in his library at Abbotsford, and Burns at his desk. But you must not omit to notice the engraving of Dickens's vacant chair, that etching of Lord Tennyson, and those portraits of Emerson and Longfellow.

But you speak of departing, kindly visitor; and I accompany you to the door, glad to be alone again

with my thoughts, for you have driven me once more in upon myself by that unintentional allusion to the friend I have lost, and ill can spare.

II.

STROLLING about the old garden, I sometimes think of the remarkable men who used to wander about another old garden—that of Dante Rossetti in Chelsea; for at one time the poet-painter had living with him his brother William, Swinburne, and George Meredith. I am happily, however, without the “birds and fowls of all kinds, and beasts of nearly all kinds too—dogs, cats, wombats, kangaroos, armadilloes, all manner of creatures,” which used to tenant Rossetti’s demesne. I am content to have only the swallows skimming about, and the bees passing from flower to flower, while the song-birds stretch their little throats in the trees.

And with those men what discourses on art and letters there must have been in the evenings, in the studio which opened out into the Chelsea garden from the ground-floor! I wonder what Carlyle, living within a stone's-throw of the house,* thought of the talented group who made it their habitation! Busy as he was at this time with his voluminous *Frederick the Great*, he had not many moments to spare on such (to him) paltry dalliers with the earnestness of life. The man who could indicate the narrowness of his artistic sympathies by declaring that "Tennyson wrote in verse because the schoolmasters had

* Carlyle did not like "birds and fowls of all kinds." In his reminiscences of his wife we find him writing: "House was hardly finished, when there arose that of the 'demon fowls,' as she appropriately named them; macaws, cochinchinas, endless concert of crowing, cackling, shrieking roosters (from a bad or misled neighbour, next door) which cut us off from sleep or peace, at times altogether, and were like to drive me mad, and her through me, through sympathy with me."

taught him that it was great to do so, and had thus been turned from the true path for a man ;" that " Burns had in like manner been turned from his vocation," and that " Shakespeare had not had the good sense to see that it would have been better to write straight on in prose," would certainly have been scornful of the aims and dreams of his near neighbours, or, to say the least of it, would have been sorely tempted to put to them the question he laid before William Black, " But when are ye goin' to do some *work*?" And yet the heroism, the forgetfulness of self, that prompted Rossetti in the seclusion of his Chelsea home to paint and poetize without caring a straw what outsiders thought of his life or his productions, seems to us in some measure akin to the temper in which Carlyle himself accomplished his best work. Alas, how circumscribed is human sympathy !

how little one great man is really acquainted with the spirit of another! Hawthorne knew where to touch his canvas with effect when he drew the portrait for which he himself probably sat: "Like all other men around whom an engrossing purpose wreathes itself, he was insulated from the mass of humankind. He had no aim, no pleasure, no sympathies, but what were intimately connected with his art."

Sitting here in my study of an evening, I often find pleasure in recalling to memory the descriptions of the favourite nooks of great men—authors in particular. It is, certainly, no mean pleasure to be able at times to enter with the realism of a fervent imagination into the lives of worthy men who have made their mark and passed on—thus sharing with them their strength and their triumphs, and the seasons of peaceful

rest which have sometimes come to them, as they should come to every struggler, in the evening of life, sweet as the sunshine which follows the storm. It has been said that of all the men distinguished in this or any other age, Dr. Johnson has left upon posterity the strongest and most vivid impression, so far as person, manners, disposition, and conversation are concerned. We do but name him, or open a book which he has written, and the sound and action recall to the imagination at once his form, his merit, his peculiarities, nay, the very uncouthness of his gestures and the deep impressive tones of his voice. We learn not only what he said, but how he said it. And all this is certainly by reason of the minute particulars of the man under the various conditions of life which we find in Boswell's gossip. It is through Boswell's tattle that Johnson thus looms

strong and vivid, rather than through any writings of his own.

But this prying into particulars can be carried to a ridiculous extent, as, for instance, when one descends to inquire :

“How oft, in Homer, Paris curl'd his hair ;
If Aristotle's cap were round or square ;
If in the cave where Dido first was sped,
To Tyre she turn'd her heels, to Troy her head ?”

I would, however, at this point, repeat the indication I have given of the way the wind of my fancy blows, by candidly avowing that, notwithstanding the glamour and witchery De Quincey has thrown round the room, “seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high,” in which he spent so many happy hours, to me the fact that his cottage stood in a valley eighteen miles from any town, rather militates against its being considered an ideal nest. I pretend not to be a man of learning ; I am but a lover of books.

I am not self-contained as great men are, who, with burdens of wisdom which others *must* have acquaintance with before their happiness or higher welfare is secure, are content to dwell anywhere so that they may, undisturbed, spin out their wisdom-web. I rather like to think of Tennyson's picture in the *Gardener's Daughter* :

“Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
 Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
 News from the humming city comes to it
 In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
 And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
 The windy clanging of the minster clock;
 Although between it and the garden lies
 A league of grass, washed by a slow, broad
 stream,
 That stirred with languid pulses of the oar,
 Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
 Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
 Crown'd with the minster-towers.
 The fields between
 Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-uddered kine,
 And all about the large lime feathers low,
 The lime a summer home of murmurous wings.”

The occasional rub against men and women of the world is certainly worth something if it but creates an

intenser longing for the quiet of the study and the companionship of books. After the hurry and scurry of life in the glaring light and the dusty day, 'tis something to find the cool retreat where "are the tombs of such as cannot die." To stroll with Izaak Walton, or to sit with Charles Lamb in the silent evening of a day that has been spent "on 'Change," is to find again the soul which for a season had been lost. There is a story told of an old sergeant who took to himself a wife, and when asked one day by a superior officer what made him think of marrying at his time of life, replied : "Why, an' please your honour, they tease and put me out of humour when abroad, so I go home and beat my wife." The lover of good books, when he gets out of humour with the world, goes home, and, picking up a favourite author, finds entertainment of a kind more soothing to the ruffled

spirit than even the amusement of the old sergeant.

The very naming of a man's study should carry with it the idea of freedom from interruption and noise of every kind. Scott, however, penned his *Rokeby* in the midst of a very Babel, created by masons and carpenters busy building. At this time he had no room of his own, but worked with his wife and children, his servants and all the building fraternity round him. If he wanted at any particular time to indulge in a little quiet, this was only to be secured in a rough home-made fashion by setting his desk in the recess of his window, and shielding his retreat by hanging up curtains at his back. Later on, he used to sit of a morning at his work with his study always open to his children and dogs. He never considered the tattle of his children as any disturbance. "They

went and came as pleased their fancy. He was always ready to answer their questions ; and when they, unconscious how he was engaged, entreated him to lay down his pen and tell them a story, he would take them on his knee, repeat a ballad or a legend, kiss them, and set them down again to their marbles or ninepins, and resume his labour as if refreshed by the interruption." The position of Burns I can understand a little better. He composed his songs in the open air, and the music of nature is no interruption. Their mere transfer to paper could easily be done by him of an evening at his window, while his wife went on with her spinning and the children with their play.*

Scott's example in one other matter has failed to infect many. Who could turn out of bed at five o'clock in the

* Like many other writers, Hawthorne had always to be alone at his work. No one ever saw him in the act of writing—not even his wife.

morning all the year round, and be at his desk by six? The sight of an unlit fire is enough to freeze the warmest idea. It would be different could one depend upon the sunshine being always in waiting. But how many days in the year do we really get sunshine? And Thomas Love Peacock was not above getting up morning after morning *with the sun*. But he had to light his own fire. I fail to see why he should thus tamper with the rights of the night, when under the friendliness of full sunshine he could seat himself on his garden lawn, "with the door of his library open behind him, showing delicious vistas of shady shelves." The sun should be allowed to dally over his toilet, uninterrupted by mortal gaze, for certainly a couple of hours after his rising. To push acquaintance with a friend thus early in the morning is an outrage on all feelings of

delicacy, a tearing in shreds of every consideration of true etiquette. Rather let us think of the author of *Waverley* "clothed and in his right mind" in his quiet little study in Edinburgh, busy with his manuscript when the candles were brought in, "and God knows how long after that."

Lamb pretended to take a positive delight in the smell of the taper, which he declared lingered about the richest descriptions of sunrise. Unlike old Dr. Johnson, it used to take something more powerful than Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* to get him out of bed two hours before rising-time. And indeed, upon due consideration of the matter, such morning haste would deprive one altogether of the previous evening's pleasure of reading one's self to sleep. Wycherley used to woo the Goddess of Dreams in a truly bookish manner, closing his eyes at nights fresh from

the pages of either Montaigne, Rochefoucauld, Seneca, or Gracian; for these were his favourite authors. His practice seems to have been to write in the morning on subjects similar to those which had attracted his attention in the evening's reading, so using the thoughts he had gleaned, or rather, thus finding them again in his own language after having lived in their company through the hours of the night. Pope records this as one of the strangest phenomena he had ever observed in the human mind; and what he relates has every appearance of truth, for, during one whole winter, he visited Wycherley almost every evening and morning.





SOME OTHER FOLKS' STUDIES.

I.

THE library of Southey at Keswick must have been little short of a special dispensation of Providence to the remarkable men who gathered at one time in the Lake district. Coleridge called it his wife, and Wordsworth borrowed from its riches; yet not always, I apprehend, with that welcome which he could desire, for he was slovenly and barbarous in his treatment of such printed treasures. "You might as well turn a bear into a tulip garden as let Wordsworth loose in your library." De Quincey has given us in his *Confessions* an admir-

able picture of his own study, which he describes as being contrived "a double debt to pay," a drawing-room crammed with a plain scholar's daily food. In his *Recollections of the Lakes* he paints for us another interior. "Southey's collection" (so goes the word-picture) "occupied a separate room, the largest, and every way the most agreeable, in the house; and this room was styled, and not ostentatiously (for it really merited that name), the Library. The house itself—Greta Hall—stood upon a little eminence, overhanging the river Greta. There was nothing remarkable in its internal arrangements; in all respects it was a very plain, unadorned family dwelling.* . . . Interesting this room (the library) was, indeed, and in a degree not often rivalled. The col-

* Coleridge lived at one time with Southey, and had a separate study, which was distinguished by nothing except by an organ amongst its furniture and by a magnificent view from its window.

lection of books, which formed the most conspicuous part of its furniture, was in all senses a good one. The books were chiefly English, Spanish, and Portuguese; well selected, being the great cardinal classics of the three literatures, fine copies, and decorated externally with a reasonable elegance, so as to make them in harmony with the other embellishments of the room. This effect was aided by the horizontal arrangement upon brackets of many rare manuscripts, Spanish or Portuguese. Made thus gay within, the room stood in little need of attractions from without. Yet, even upon the gloomiest day of winter, the landscape from the different windows was too permanently commanding in its grandeur, too essentially independent of the seasons, to fail in fascinating the gaze of the coldest and dullest spectator. The lake of Derwentwater in one direction, with its lovely islands,

a lake about nine miles in circuit, and shaped pretty much like a boy's kite; the lake of Bassenthwaite in another; the mountains of Newlands shaping themselves as pavilions; the gorgeous confusion of Borrowdale just revealing its sublime chaos through the narrow vista of its gorge; all these objects lay in different angles to the front; whilst the sullen rear, not visible on this side of the house, was closed by the vast and towering masses of Skiddaw and Blencathara, mountains which are rather to be considered as frontier barriers, and chains of hilly ground, cutting the county of Cumberland into great chambers and different climates, than as insulated eminences, so vast is the area which they occupy. This grand panorama of mountain scenery, so varied, so extensive, and yet having the delightful feeling about it of a deep seclusion and dell-like sequestration from the

world—a feeling which, in the midst of so expansive an area spread out below his windows, could not have been sustained by any barriers less elevated than Skiddaw or Blanka-thara; this congregation of hill and lake, so wide, and yet so prison-like in its separation from all beyond it, lay for ever under the eyes of Southey.”

Here, within the four corners of his library with its magnificent outlook, Southey was content to live and work. “Imagine me,” he writes, “in this great study of mine, from breakfast till dinner, from dinner till tea, and from tea till supper, in my old black coat, my corduroys alternately with the long worsted pantaloons and gaiters in one, and the green shade, and sitting at my desk, and you have my picture and my history.” His daily plan of work he describes in one place as “Three pages of history after breakfast (equivalent to five in

small quarto printing); then to transcribe and copy for the press, or to make my selections and biographies, or what else suits my humour, till dinner-time; from dinner till tea I read, write letters, see the newspaper, and very often indulge in a *siesta*, for sleep agrees with me, and I have a good substantial theory to prove that it must, for as a man who walks much requires to sit down and rest himself, so does the brain, if it be the part most worked, require its repose. After tea I go to poetry, and correct and re-write and copy till I am tired, and then turn to anything else till supper; and this is my life, which, if it be not a very merry one, is yet as happy as heart could wish."

We all know the story Wordsworth was so fond of relating, of how a visitor once called at Rydal Mount, and asked permission of the servant to see the poet's study. The girl took him into

a little room containing some odd volumes scattered about, and said: "This is the master's library, where he keeps his books ; but," nodding in the direction of the window, "his *study* is out of doors."* Most of Wordsworth's poetry was composed "out of doors," as he walked about in the woods, or on the terraces cut in the rock near the house, or by the side of

* "The two or three hundred volumes of Wordsworth occupied a little homely-painted bookcase, fixed into one of two shallow recesses formed on each side of the fireplace by the projection of the chimney in the little sitting-room upstairs. They were ill bound, or not bound at all—in boards, sometimes in tatters ; many were imperfect as to the number of volumes, mutilated as to the number of pages : sometimes, where it seemed worth while, the defects being supplied by manuscript ; sometimes not. In short, everything showed that the books were for use, and not for show ; and their limited amount showed that their possessor must have independent sources of enjoyment to fill up the major part of his time. In reality, when the weather was tolerable, I believe that Wordsworth rarely resorted to his books (unless, perhaps, to some little pocket edition of a poet which accompanied him in his rambles), except in the evenings, or after he had tired himself by walking."—DE QUINCEY.

"the brook that runs through Ease-dale," and was generally associated in his mind with some rural sight or sound. The poet tells of the composition of the *White Doe of Rylstone*, which was begun at Stockton-on-Tees. "The country," he says, "was flat, and the weather was rough. I was accustomed every day to walk to and fro under the shelter of a row of stacks, in a field at a small distance from the town, and there poured out my verses aloud, as freely as they would come." But this was while on a visit to his brother-in-law. The study he loved was the picturesque country surrounding his own home at the lakes. Lamb, on the contrary, could live and work only in London, and declared that his "love for natural scenery would be abundantly satisfied by the patches of long waving grass and the stunted trees that blacken in the old church-yard nooks, which you may yet find

bordering on Thames Street." Although once lured to Keswick by Coleridge, Lamb's raptures about the scenery did not rise very high, and after admitting that Skiddaw was grand and fine enough in its way, and that probably he should enjoy life in Coleridge's country for a year or so, he was compelled to confess that he should "mope and pine away if he had no prospect of again seeing Fleet Street." Writing to Wordsworth in 1801, he said: "I don't much care if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature. The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street, the innumerable trades, tradesmen, and customers, coaches, waggons, playhouses; all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden; the very women of

the Town; the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles; life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night; the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street; the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print-shops, the old book-stalls, parsons cheapening books, coffee-houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes—London itself a pantomime and a masquerade—all these things work themselves into my mind, and feed me, without a power of satiating me. . . .

“My attachments are all local, purely local. . . . The room where I was born, the furniture which has been before my eyes all my life, a book-case which has followed me about like a faithful dog (only exceeding him in knowledge) wherever I have moved, old chairs, old tables, streets, squares, where I have sunned myself, my old school,—these are my mistresses.

Have I not enough, without your mountains? I do not envy you. I should pity you, did I not know that the mind will make friends of anything."

Let us place by the side of Lamb's confession of faith what Southey wrote of London: "To dwell in that foul city—to endure the common, hollow, cold, lip-intercourse of life—to walk abroad and never see green field, or running brook, or setting sun—will it not," he asks, "wither up my faculties like some poor myrtle that in

‘Town air
Pines in the parlour window?’”

It is interesting to glean what particulars we can of the rooms Lamb used successively as studies. In 1806, under the impression that he could write his farce better away from home, he hired an apartment at three shillings a week, to which he betook himself of an evening, to be alone with his work.

Within a month, however, we find Mary Lamb writing : " The lodging is given up, and here he is again—Charles, I mean. When he went to the poor lodging, after the holidays I told you he had taken, he could not endure the solitariness of them, and I had no rest till I promised to believe his solemn protestations that he could and would write as well at home as there." In 1809 Lamb writes to Coleridge : " I have been turned out of my chambers in the Temple by a landlord who wanted them for himself, but I have got other at No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, far more commodious and roomy. I have two rooms on the third floor, and five rooms above, with an inner staircase to myself But alas ! the household gods are slow to come in a new mansion. They are in their infancy to me ; I do not feel them yet ; no hearth has blazed to them yet. How I hate and dread new

places! I have put up my shelves. You never saw a bookcase in more true harmony with the contents than what I've nailed up in a room, which though new, has more aptitudes for growing old than you shall often see; as one sometimes gets a friend in the middle of life, who becomes an old friend in a short time." In November 1814, Mary Lamb writes to a correspondent: "We still live in Temple Lane, but I am now sitting in a room you never saw. Soon after you left us we were distressed by the cries of a cat, which seemed to proceed from the garrets adjoining to ours, and only separated from ours by the locked door on the farther side of my brother's bedroom, which you know was the little room at the top of the kitchen stairs. We had the lock forced and let poor puss out from behind a panel of the wainscot, and she lived with us from that time, for we were in grati-

tude bound to keep her, as she had introduced us to four untenanted, unowned rooms, and by degrees we have taken possession of these unclaimed apartments. . . . Last winter, my brother being unable to pursue a work he had begun, owing to the kind interruptions of friends who were more at leisure than himself, I persuaded him that he might write at his ease in one of these rooms, as he could not then hear the door-knock, or hear himself denied to be at home, which was sure to make him call out and convict the poor maid in a fib. Here, I said, he might be almost really not at home. So I put in an old grate and made him a fire in the largest of these garrets, and carried in one table and one chair, and bid him write away, and consider himself as much alone as if he were in some lodging in the midst of Salisbury Plain, or any other wide unfrequented place, where he

could expect few visitors to break in upon his solitude. I left him quite delighted with his new acquisition, but in a few hours he came down again with a sadly dismal face. He could do nothing, he said, with those bare, white-washed walls before his eyes. He could not write in that dull unfurnished prison. The next day, before he came home from his office, I had gathered up various bits of old carpeting to cover the floor ; and to a little break the blank look of the bare walls, I hung up a few old prints that used to ornament the kitchen, and after dinner, with great boast of what an improvement I had made, I took Charles once more into his new study. . . . To conclude this long story about nothing, the poor despised garret is now called the print-room, and is become our most favourite sitting-room."

From the Temple Lamb moved, in

1817, to Covent Garden, and ten years afterwards to Enfield, where several of the later *Essays of Elia* were written. The house "was divided by a narrow passage, and the two sitting-rooms on the left hand in entering, were those inhabited by the Lambs. Their usual snuggerly was the one looking out on the garden. Therein was the old library ; the old engravings covered the walls ; and in that quiet nook Lamb wrote those immortal pages."

At Enfield, according to George Daniel, Lamb took to the culture of plants. "He watched the growth of his tulips with the gusto of a veteran florist, and became learned in all their gaudy varieties. He grew enamoured of anemones. He planted, pruned, and grafted ; and seldom walked abroad without a bouquet in his button-hole. The rose was his favourite flower. . . . I helped him

to arrange his darling folios (Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, and Company) in his pleasant dining-room; to hang in the best light his portraits of the poets, and his 'Hogarths' (the latter in old-fashioned ebony frames) in his newly finished drawing-room; and to adorn the mantelpieces with his Chelsea china."

That Lamb had an eye for what was truly comfortable in the way of a study, and knew, moreover, how to cheer a friend's heart with a few bright words, might be gathered from his declaring, on visiting Leigh Hunt's room in prison, that there certainly was no other such apartment except in a fairy tale. Hunt had carried his refined taste with him even to his place of confinement: he had the walls papered with a trellis of roses, the ceiling coloured with clouds and sky, and the barred windows screened with

Venetian blinds. "When my book-cases were set up," he himself wrote, "with their busts, and flowers and a pianoforte made their appearance, perhaps there was not a handsomer room on that side the water. . . . When I sat amidst my books, and saw the imaginary sky overhead, and my paper roses about me, I drank in the quiet at my ears, as if they were thirsty."

This was in 1813. In 1817 "Barry Cornwall" (another friend of Lamb's) visited Hunt for the first time. Hunt was then living at York Buildings, in a house "small, and scantily furnished." "In it," writes the visitor, "was a tiny room, built out at the back of the drawing-room or first-floor, which he appropriated as a study, and over the door of this was a line from the *Fairy Queen* of Spenser, painted in gold letters. On a small table in this study, covered with

humble green baize, Leigh Hunt sat and wrote his articles for the *Examiner* and *Indicator*, and his verses. He had very few books; an edition of the Italian Poets, in many volumes, Spenser's works, and the minor poems of Milton (edited by Warton), being, however, amongst them. I don't think that there was a Shakespeare. There were always a few cut flowers, in a glass of water, on the table."*

Forty years afterwards, with the weariness and some of the despondency of age, Procter writes to a friend: "I shall never see Italy; I shall never see Paris. My future is before me—a very limited landscape,

* In the autumn of 1856 before going abroad, Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke went to take leave of Leigh Hunt at "his pretty little cottage in Cornwall Road, Hammersmith." "We found him," they say, "as of old, with simple, but tasteful environments, his books and papers about him, engravings and plaster-casts around his room, while he himself was full of his wonted cordiality and cheerful warmth of reception for old friends."

with scarcely one old friend left in it." But the spirit of the book-lover creeps in anon, and he continues: "I see a smallish room, with a bow-window looking south, a bookcase full of books, three or four drawings, and a library chair and table (once the property of my old friend Kenyon—I am writing on the table now)—you have the greater part of the vision before you."

II.

IN Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, in the fair New England village of Concord, rest the mortal remains of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau, three great men whose names alone conspire to make the little spot a very place of pilgrimage to the world of letters.

In this literary Mecca these men whilst living crossed each other's path often, and always with kindly smiles of greeting. The trees loved by one were loved by the others; the solitude of the woods was equally sweet to each; the Concord river and the Walden pond knew their most cherished thoughts; and in one house at least—the Old Manse—two of the three who now rest in Sleepy Hollow lived and thought in turns.

“There in the old grey house, whose end we see
 Half peeping through the golden willow's veil,
 Whose graceful twigs make foliage through the
 year,
 My Hawthorne dwelt, a scholar of rare worth,
 The gentlest man that kindly nature drew.”

But before Hawthorne took up his residence in the Old Manse, Emerson had lived there, and in a room “in the rear of the house, the most delightful little nook of a study that ever afforded its snug seclusion to a scholar,” *God*

and *Ralph Waldo Emerson* had written *Nature*.* In this same nook Hawthorne afterwards wrote his *Mosses*, from the opening chapter of which we cull the following :

“When I first saw the room its walls were blackened with the smoke of unnumbered years, and made still blacker by the grim prints of Puritan ministers that hung around. These worthies looked strangely like bad angels, or at least like men who had wrestled so continually with the devil that somewhat of his sooty fierceness had been imparted to their own visages. They had all vanished now ; a cheerful coat of paint and golden-tinted paper-hangings lighted up the small apartment, while the shadow of a willow tree that swept against the

* Published in 1836 without the author's name. On the title-page were these words from Plotinus : “Nature is but an image or imitation of wisdom, the last thing of the soul ; nature being a thing which doth only do, but not know.”

overhanging eaves attempered the cheery western sunshine. In place of the grim prints there was the sweet and lovely head of one of Raphael's Madonnas, and two pleasant little pictures of the Lake of Como. The only other decorations were a purple vase of flowers, always fresh, and a bronze one containing graceful ferns. My books (few, and by no means choice, for they were chiefly such waifs as chance had thrown in my way) stood in order about the room, seldom to be disturbed.

"The study had three windows, set with little, old-fashioned panes of glass, each with a crack across it. The two on the western side looked, or rather peeped, between the willow branches, down into the orchard, with glimpses of the river through the trees. The third, facing northward, commanded a broader view of the river, at a spot where its hitherto

obscure waters gleam forth into the light of history."

But we must refer our readers to our own source for further information as to the river, the battle-field, the orchard, the garden, and the huge garret, concerning all of which Hawthorne wrote with such loving attachment. In the meanwhile the old books in the upper chamber may be noticed. "A part of my predecessor's library," writes Hawthorne (*not* Ralph Waldo Emerson's library, be it noted), "was stored in the garret—no unfit receptacle, indeed, for such dreary trash as comprised the greater number of volumes. The old books would have been worth nothing at an auction. In this venerable garret, however, they possessed an interest quite apart from their literary value, as heirlooms, many of which had been transmitted down through a series of consecrated hands from the days of the

mighty Puritan divines. Autographs of famous names were to be seen in faded ink on some of their fly-leaves; and there were marginal observations or interpolated pages closely covered with manuscript in illegible shorthand, perhaps concealing matter of profound truth and wisdom. The world will never be the better for it. A few of the books were Latin folios, written by Catholic authors; others demolished Papistry, as with a sledge-hammer, in plain English. A dissertation on the Book of Job—which only Job himself could have had patience to read—filled at least a score of small, thick-set quartos, at the rate of two or three volumes to a chapter. Then there was a vast folio body of divinity—too corpulent a body, it might be feared, to comprehend the spiritual element of religion. Volumes of this form dated back two hundred years or more, and were generally

bound in black leather, exhibiting precisely such an appearance as we should attribute to books of enchantment. Others, equally antique, were of a size proper to be carried in the large waistcoat pockets of old times—diminutive, but as black as their bulkier brethren, and abundantly interspersed with Greek and Latin quotations. These little old volumes impressed me as if they had been intended for very large ones, but had been unfortunately blighted at an early stage of their growth.”

All this causes one involuntarily to remember the treasures secured by an eager collector at a fishmonger's shop in Old Hungerford Market some fifty years since—autograph signatures of Godolphin, Sunderland, Ashley, Lauderdale, ministers of James II.; accounts of the Exchequer Office, signed by Henry VII. and Henry VIII; wardrobe accounts of Queen

Anne, and dividend receipts signed by Pope, Newton, Dryden, and Wren; secret service accounts marked with the "E. G." of Nell Gwynne; a treatise on the Eucharist, in the boyish hand of Edward VI.; and a disquisition on the Order of the Garter, in the scholarly writing of Elizabeth—all of which had been included in waste-paper cleared out of Somerset House at £7 a ton.

Then, again, the discovery of *Evelyn's Diary* affords one of the most amusing anecdotes of literary history, a full account of which is to be found in Goodhugh's *Library Manual*:

"In the beginning of April, 1813, Mr. William Upcott (author of the most valuable bibliographical work extant on British topography) went to Wootton, in Surrey, the residence of the Evelyn family, for the first time, accompanied by Mr. Bray, the highly

respected author of the *History of Surrey*, and acknowledged editor of John Evelyn's *Memoirs*, for the purpose of arranging and making a catalogue of the library, which had been thrown into much confusion by its removal for safety, in consequence of accidental fire in an outbuilding.

"Early in the following year (1814) the task was completed. Sitting one evening, after dinner, with Lady Evelyn and her intimate friend Mrs. Molineaux, Mr. Upcott's attention was attracted to a tippet being made of feathers, on which Lady Evelyn was employed.

"‘We have all of us our hobbies, I perceive, my lady,’ said Mr. Upcott. ‘Very true,’ rejoined her ladyship; ‘and pray what may yours be?’ ‘Mine, madam, from a very early age, began by collecting provincial copper tokens, and, latterly, the handwriting (or autographs) of men who have dis-

tinguished themselves in every walk of life.' 'Handwritings!' answered Lady Evelyn, with much surprise, 'what do you mean by handwritings? Surely you don't mean old letters?' at the same time opening the drawer of her work-table, and taking out a small parcel of papers, some of which had been just used by Mrs. Molineaux, as patterns for articles of dress. The sight of this packet, though of no literary importance, yet containing letters written by eminent characters of the seventeenth century, more particularly one from the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, afforded the greatest pleasure to Mr. Upcott, who took occasion to express his exceeding delight in looking them over. 'Oh!' added Lady Evelyn, 'if you care for papers like those, you shall have plenty; for Sylva Evelyn (the familiar appellation applied to John Evelyn by his descendants), and

those who succeeded him, preserved all their letters.' Then, ringing for her confidential attendant, 'Here,' said her ladyship, 'Mr. Upcott tells me that he is fond of collecting old letters; take the key of the ebony cabinet, in the billiard-room, procure a basket, and bring down some of the bundles.' Mr. Upcott accompanied the attendant, and, having brought a quantity of these letters into the dining-room, passed one of the most agreeable evenings imaginable in examining the contents of each packet; with the assurance from Lady Evelyn that he was welcome to lay aside any that might add to his own collection.

"The following evening the delicious ebony cabinet was visited a second time, when Evelyn's *Kalendarium*, as he entitled it, or *Diary*, a small quarto volume, without covers, very closely written with his own hand, presented itself."

But we must curb this gossipy memory of ours, which, started in this manner, goes on in recollection heaped on recollection, revelling in the treasures bibliophiles rave about, which have been found at odd times cleared out of old libraries as rubbish, and return to Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau, in whose company we started.

In 1835, Emerson took possession of the plain, square, wooden house, on the Lexington Road, east of the Concord village, and not far from Walden Pond and the river ; and in this house the rest of his life was passed. "It stands among trees, with a pine-grove across the street in front, and a small orchard and garden reaching to a brook in the rear. On the south-east side it looks toward another orchard, on the edge of which formerly stood the picturesque summer-house built for Mr. Emerson in

1847-48 by his friend Mr. Bronson Alcott." In *Scribner's Monthly* for February, 1879, among the woodcuts illustrative of an interesting article on "The Homes and Haunts of Emerson," is to be found one of the library. Looking upon it, we see at once how truthful is the word-picture we have in *Poets' Homes* of the "plain, square room, lined on two sides with simple wooden shelves filled with choice books." "A large mahogany table stands in the middle, covered with books, and by the morocco writing-pad lies the pen which has had so great an influence for twenty-five years on the thoughts of two continents. A large fireplace with high brass andirons occupies the lower end, over which hangs a fine copy of Michael Angelo's Fates, the faces of the strong-minded women frowning upon all who would disturb with idle tongues this haunt of solemn

thought. On the mantel-shelf are busts and statuettes of men prominent in the great reforms of the age, and a quaint rough idol brought from the Nile. A few choice engravings hang upon the walls, and the pine-trees brush against the windows." In the engraving mentioned we get just a peep into another room beyond, the "parlour" in which the celebrated "conversations" were held. Here have sat at various times men and women whose names are known and honoured wherever the English language is spoken. "Here Margaret Fuller, and the other bright figures of the *Dial* met for conversation and consultation." Thoreau was a daily visitor, and his wood-notes might have been unuttered but for the kind encouragement he found here." But it would require pages to make but a brief list of these notable visitors—Whittier, Longfellow, the Channings,

the Lowells, the Stanleys, Theodore Parker, and Bret Harte among the number. Here, in company with Emerson, Hawthorne, "the handsome, moody, despairing genius," would sometimes wake up from his "morbid reveries."

We have already referred to the interesting fact that in the Old Manse, in the room in which Emerson wrote *Nature*, Hawthorne also wrote his *Mosses*. Previously, in a little "upper story or attic," in Herbert Street, Salem, his *Twice-Told Tales* had been written. For those who care to follow Hawthorne in his subsequent flittings, marking the spots in which his books were penned, there are the two admirable volumes of his *Life* by his son. There is also a charming woodcut in the *Century* for July, 1884, of Hawthorne's nook at The Wayside, in which he wrote *Our Old Home*, "a pleasant little room, lofty

and with vaulted ceiling." Of this little study Hawthorne was very fond, and in it his last work was accomplished.

"When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them," Thoreau tells us, when speaking of his book *Walden*, "I lived alone in the woods, a mile from any neighbour, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labour of my hands only. My house was on the side of a hill, immediately on the edge of the larger wood, in the midst of a young forest of pitch-pines and hickories, and half a dozen rods from the pond, to which a narrow foot-path led down the hill." This was the "writing-case"—the "wooden inkstand" in which Thoreau "wrote a good part of his famous *Walden*, and this solitary woodland pool was more to his Muse than all oceans

of the planet, by the force of imagination." Thoreau is getting to be better understood just now, thanks to his careful biographers; and it is a generally accepted fact that he "went to the woods because he wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if he could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when he came to die, discover that he had not lived." His own words are well known: "My purpose in going to Walden was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles." This "private business" was transacted, and remains with us now, and will be handed down to posterity in the shape of a book.

III.

THE peculiar conditions which qualify literary work of all kinds are varied,

and not to be codified or gauged according to any known laws. One author can work anywhere and everywhere, by his fireside or in the railway-carriage, always with equal certainty of copious thought and loosened speech ; another, only in the quiet of his study in the early morning ; a third, never but in the stillness of the midnight hours : one needs stimulants ; another, the smell of rose-leaves or dried apples : one dreads the crowing of his neighbour's roosters ; another considers all this very insignificant, and beneath his notice—he waits in painful expectancy for the horrid shriek of the locomotive which *will* pass just when it is not wanted, and always with, what he thinks, unnecessary noise : one gets into an unnatural perspiration at the eternal grind of the barrel-organ ; another accustoms himself to look upon the Italian with his

wretched music as no mean relief to the monotony of a quiet life, and, at his approach, conjures up all the pleasures of life beneath a southern sun and in the face of the blue Mediterranean.*

To some men of genius unfavourable circumstances exist only to be ignored, or else to be conquered with an iron hand, prompted by an inflexible will. Set down one of these in a

* Most of Miss Louisa Allcott's stories have been written in Boston, where she finds more inspiration than at Concord. "She never had a study," says Mrs. Moulton, "any corner will answer to write in. She is not particular as to pens and paper, and an old atlas on her knee is all the desk she cares for. She has the wonderful power to carry a dozen plots in her head at a time, thinking them over whenever she is in the mood. Often, in the middle of the night, she lies awake and plans whole chapters. In her hardest working days she used to write fourteen hours in the twenty-four, scarcely tasting food till her daily task was done. When she has a story to write she goes to Boston, hires a quiet room, and shuts herself up in it. In a month or so the book will be done, and its author comes out 'tired, hungry, and cross,' and ready to go back to Concord and vegetate for a time," in the house where Thoreau died.

garret through which the wind whistles or upon which the sun pours intolerable heat, and if he has no inclination to devote his time to moulding his chaos of circumstances into more desirable shape, he will take his pen or pencil and write or paint such revelations of the realms of Hope, Memory, or Imagination, as will startle the world from indifference into recognition. By unrolling his panorama of a Paradise Lost or Regained, a Jerusalem Delivered, or a Purgatory Explored, he will proclaim definitely, and with somewhat of defiance, that greatness borrows little or nought from actual surroundings, but is its own world to itself. This God-given gift of genius is, however, rare, and its recipients form a unique galaxy to be contemplated wonderingly, but without knowledge of any laws which govern it. The condition of its clay-covering is sometimes pitiable enough.

Now we see it in a prison, in the dungeon of a monastery, in captivity in strange lands, poor and blind, perishing with hunger, with a blanket for an only covering held together by a skewer, hunted down by religious bigotry, kicked, starved, spat upon. How mysterious are the ways of an ever-living Compensation! Often money and luxury wed themselves to a dead soul, whilst a living soul has only its life for its portion—worldly goods none. The works of genius in poverty laugh by their very gorgeousness at the mean environments of their creators. Lower, however, in the scale we find genius qualified by talent or mere artistic taste; and in work resulting from this alloy the effects of surroundings and circumstances are plainly to be seen. A man of mere talent suffers to be burnt in upon his individuality what a man of genius casts lightly aside. And to

ordinary mortals these imprints are pleasing; they indicate the kinship existing between themselves and the author or artist who caters for their instruction or amusement. They are on an equal footing; each is affected alike by pleasure and pain, comfort and misery, riches and poverty. In the case of an author, the world is affectionate towards him, amicably disposed, in some cases even lavish of love, if he will but show that he is human in his delights, appreciating the comforts of home, and disposed to enjoy a good story. As the result of all this, we find a great deal of an author's personality exhibited in the internal arrangements of his house, especially of the room in which he works; this in turn reveals itself in a somewhat idealized manner in his books, thus completing the bond existing between writer and readers. He has shown himself to us, and we

are content ; his life is henceforth ours, to be pondered over, to rejoice in, or to cast mud upon.

Take, for instance, this little volume of poems, by Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney, which lies before me. Its whole spirit and particular workmanship are of a part with the cheery glimpse given us of the author and her surroundings. "Mrs. Whitney sometimes takes her writing," says a biographer, "into one of the barns, and makes a nest for herself in the soft, fragrant hay-heap. She used to keep a dictionary and some books of reference on a little shelf, which one of the boys fixed up for her in the mow, and come out here regularly. We are specially fond of the place on Sunday, when we spend the greater part of the morning here, since there is no church-going until afternoon. We fling the great doors wide, and pile the sweet, fresh hay on the floor, and sit where we can

look out upon the picture of waving trees and distant slopes, which the lintels enframe ; and where

“ ‘ Far off, leaning on each other,
Shining hills on hills arise,
Close as brother leans to brother,
When they press beneath the eyes
Of some father praying blessing,
From the gifts of Paradise.’ ”

“ And we have our best talks here, in the quiet and restfulness which seem peculiarly the atmosphere of this day even in this peaceful land, whither the cares and turmoil of life do not often penetrate as in the busy places of the world.”

Here is another volume at hand which illustrates this subtle interweaving of soul with surroundings. This also is by an American songstress, Celia Thaxter. “ Her sprayey stanzas give us the dip of the sea-bird’s wing, the foam and tangle of ocean, varied interpretations of clamoring sunrise, mists, and evening’s

fiery cloud above the main." And all this is but perfectly natural ; her talent has been qualified and fed by that life of hers at Appledore, one of the Isles of Shoals, without which it would have been wanting in the most noticeable points of its attractiveness. But examples of this kind flood in upon our memory from many lands, where men and women, thirsting for expression, have found the materials they wanted ready collected for them, and have been happy in their expressed love of what they wrought in.

Sometimes by means of a strong love and a fervent imagination, environments not altogether pleasing in themselves may be brought into quiet subjection, and be made actually to minister to great faculties. In a paper on "George Eliot's Country" in *The Century* for July, 1885, the writer (Rose G. Kingsley) grasps this fact firmly. "From the study" (George Eliot's at

SOME OTHER FOLKS' STUDIES.

Foleshill), she writes, "you look on the exquisite spires of Coventry, or through the tree-stems on gently swelling fields with their hedge-row elms against the sky. It is not a locality to kindle much enthusiasm for nature or anything else. But, depend upon it, that penetrating eye and mind saw more in these uninteresting surroundings than many of the vulgar herd could see in the Alps or the 'Eternal City' itself." George Eliot's study is sketched briefly by the same writer: "Upstairs I was taken into a tiny room over the front door, with a plain square window. This was George Eliot's study. Here to the left on entering was her desk; and upon a bracket, in a corner between it and the window, stood an exquisite statuette of Christ looking towards her. Here she lived among her books, which covered the walls."

Some men's studies do not indicate

the tastes and habits of their real owners so much as they do those of the mistress of the house. Only let a woman with assistants in the shape of dusters and brushes step into an author's den, and the transformation begins. Papers are sorted and "put tidy," books arranged and rearranged; and then when the rightful king of the realm returns, lo! nothing is to be found; the new arrangement has destroyed *his* arrangement; the new tidiness has made chaos of his order.

Woe be to the man who, in a moment of weakness, gives his consent to the use of his study as a breakfast-room. Let but the most shadowy ghost of a domestic arrangement into your sanctum, and it is no longer yours. The genius of order and arrangement has been unbottled, and will henceforth proceed to grow until it attains such mighty proportions that not a corner shall be free from its

presence and influence. And what man, with anything less than a heart of stone, could resist such soft insinuations as these?

"My dear, don't you think you could let me put those odd papers on the lowest shelf of your cupboard?" (Pray note the covert bait, "*your* cupboard," as well as the knowledge of human nature evidenced by its use.)

"Don't you think, dear, that you could put those volumes up on the shelves somewhere?"

It is, however, when a student hears the near approach of the long-handled brush, accompanied by the simple words "spring-cleaning," that he begins involuntarily to review the old days of his "love's young dream," and to lament sadly that so much dreaming should have blinded his eyes to the necessity of providing against these inroads into his peace—before marriage. Such mat-

ters should, to a book-lover, form a far more important subject for marriage-settlement than aught so trivial as money or land.

O for an inspired ten commandments for the wives of literary men !

Had I my will I would crucify in print every author-pestering wife that ever lived ; and yet even to this there are objections. Readers may, instead of pouring scorn on the pests, devote their energy to finding hard names for the men who were soft enough to endure the nonsense. For my own part, when I read that Albert Dürer's wife was a shrew, and compelled her husband to drudge at his profession during every possible hour, merely to gratify her own sordid passion ; that Berghem's wife, whenever she thought her husband weary at his work, and taking a little of the rest of indolence, would rouse him up by thumping a stick against the ceil-

ing, to which the obedient artist had to answer by stamping his foot to indicate that he was not napping ; when I consider these two instances, instead of blaming the women, I rather cry "Fools" at the men.

To a literary man's heart and lips the simple prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me," is admirably suited. To this another may be added, also on account of its suitability : "Let my study be neither gorgeous nor mean, but quiet and comfortable." Although men of genius have written immortal works in garrets, they have not lived there from choice, but rather from necessity ; and notwithstanding that in many cases these garrets have become holy spots through virtue of their past occupants, and men have visited them, and lingered in their near neighbourhood with all the hero-worship of Pope, who one day in his

rambles took his friend Harte up three pairs of stairs into a small room and exclaimed: "In this garret Addison wrote his *Campaign*!"—notwithstanding this love of a garret because its floor has been pressed by the feet of genius, we must confess to a liking rather to glean our "pleasures of imagination" from pictures of workers in situations a trifle more comfortable. To my mind there never was a truer harmony existing between a man and his home, than in the case of Charles Kingsley and Eversley Rectory. Aptly has it been said that the love of home was the lever of his life, the very soul of all his joy, the very key-note of his being.

What a gentle and reverent hand is that of the Rev. William Harrison, (sharer of Kingsley's parish cares), and how lovingly it paints for us this picture! "Surely if room could be haunted by happy ghosts, it would be

his (Kingsley's) study at Eversley, peopled as it must ever be with the bright creations of his brain. There every book on the many crowded shelves looked at him with almost human friendly eyes. And of books what were there not? From huge folios of St. Augustine* to the last treatise on fly-fishing. And of what would he not talk? Classic myth and mediæval romance, magic and modern science, metaphysics and poetry, West Indian scenery and parish schools, politics and fairyland, etc., etc., and of all with vivid sympathy, keen flashes of humour, and oftentimes with much pathos and profound knowledge. As he spoke he would constantly verify his words. The book wanted—he always knew exactly where, as he said, it “lived”—was pulled down with eager hands, and

* Once the property of John Sterling, and given to Mr. Kingsley by Thomas Carlyle.

he, flinging himself back with lighted pipe into his hammock, would read, with almost boy-like zest, the passage he sought for and quickly found. It was very impressive to observe how intensely he realized the words he read. I have seen him overcome with emotion as he turned the well-thumbed pages of his Homer, or perused the tragic story of Sir Humphrey Gilbert in his beloved Hakluyt. Nor did the work of the study even at such moments shut him in entirely, or make him forgetful of what was going on outside. 'It's very pleasant,' he would say, opening the door which led on to the lawn,* and making a rush into the darkness, 'to see what is going on out here.' On one such occasion, a wild autumnal night, after the thrilling recital of a Cornish shipwreck he had

* A charming little woodcut of this study window is to be found in the second volume of Kingsley's *Life*.

once witnessed, and the memory of which the turbulence of the night had conjured up, he suddenly cried, 'Come out! come out!' We followed him into the garden, to be met by a rush of warm driving rain before a south-westerly gale, which roared through the branches of the neighbouring poplars. There he stood, unconscious of personal discomfort, for a moment silent and absorbed in thought, and then exclaimed in tones of intense enjoyment, 'What a night! Drenching! This is a night on which you young men can't think or talk too much poetry.' " *

I do not think there ever was a study which answered to, and, as it were, duplicated its owner in a greater degree than did the room of "Christopher North," in Edinburgh, which he himself called "a sort of library." It

* *Charles Kingsley: His Letters, and Memoirs of his Life.*

was "a strange mixture of what may be called order and untidiness, for there was not a scrap of paper or a book that his hand could not light upon in a moment, while to the casual eye, in search of discovery, it would appear chaos, without a chance of being cleared away.

"To anyone whose delight lay in beauty of furniture, or quaint and delicate ornament, well-appointed arrangements, and all that indescribable fascination caught from *nick-nacks* and articles of *vertu*, that apartment must have appeared a mere lumber-room. The book-shelves were of unpainted wood, knocked up in the rudest fashion, and their volumes, though not wanting in number or excellence, wore but shabby habiliments, many of them being tattered and without backs. The chief pieces of furniture in this room were two cases; one containing specimens of

foreign birds, a gift from an admirer of his genius across the Atlantic, which was used incongruously enough sometimes as a wardrobe ; the other was a book-case, but not entirely devoted to books : its glass-doors permitted a motley assortment of articles to be seen. The spirit, the tastes, and habits of the possessor were all to be found there, side by side, like a little community of domesticities.

“For example, resting upon the *Wealth of Nations* lay shining coils of gut, set off by pretty pink twinings. Peeping out from *Boxiana*, in juxtaposition with the *Faëry Queen*, were no end of delicately dressed flies ; and pocket-books well filled with gear for the ‘gentle craft’ found company with Shakespeare and Ben Jonson ; while fishing-rods, in pieces, stretched their elegant length along the shelves, embracing a whole set of

poets. Nor was the gravest philosophy without its contrast ; and Jeremy Taylor, too, found innocent repose in the neighbourhood of a tin-box of barley-sugar, excellent as when bought 'at my old man's.' Here and there, in the interstices between books, were stuffed what appeared to be dingy, crumpled bits of paper—these were bank-notes, his *class-fees*—not unfrequently, for want of a purse, thrust to the bottom of an old worsted stocking, when not honoured by a place in the book-case. I am certain he very rarely counted over the fees taken from his students. He never looked at nor touched money in the usual way ; he very often forgot where he put it ; saving when these stocking banks were his humour, no one, for his own sake, or for his own purposes, ever regarded riches with such perfect indifference. He was like the old

patriarch whose simple desires were comprehended in these words, "If God will be with me, and keep me in the way I am to go, and give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on——" other thought of wealth he had not. And so there he sat, in the majesty of unaffected dignity, surrounded by a homeliness that still left him a type of the finest gentleman; courteous to all, easy and unembarrassed in address, wearing his *négligé* with as much grace as a courtier his lace and plumes, nor leaving other impression than that which goodness makes on minds ready to acknowledge superiority; seeing there 'the elements so mixed in him, that Nature might stand up and say to all the world, this was a man.'"*

"Crusty Christopher," in such a room, writing for *Blackwood's*, pre-

* *Memoir of John Wilson, by his Daughter.*

sents altogether a more agreeable picture than does Haydn in the throes of composition, in full dress and with a diamond ring on his finger ; for it is recorded that without these accessories he could accomplish no work with satisfaction to himself.





AN IDEAL STUDY.

AS a man should find in the wife of his bosom a resting-place from the world, so in his study should he find a safe retreat from harassing care, a very arbour of choice delights, where he can enjoy, if but for an odd hour at a time, the sweets of lettered ease, and where he may be sure to find great men who are not in a hurry. Here he may suffer even Coleridge to take him by the button and discourse as was his wont ; for his delightful stand-still is refreshing, if only to think of, in the bustling nowadays.*

* Lamb used to tell a good story of Coleridge. "I was," he said, "going from my house at Enfield to the India House one morning, and was hurrying, for I was rather late, when I met Coleridge, on his way to pay me a visit. He was

I would fain write of an ideal study, paint a picture which to look upon would impart a feeling of rest to all who love the quiet of home-life in connection with books. But even in the formation of such an ideal, one is compelled to remember at the very outset, that whatever there is of ideal has its foundation in the actual, and that such a picture, however attractive, would be nothing but a recon-

brimful of some new idea, and in spite of my assuring him that time was precious, he drew me within the door of an unoccupied garden by the roadside, and there, sheltered from observation by a hedge of evergreens, he took me by the button of my coat, and closing his eyes, commenced an eloquent discourse, waving his right hand gently, as the musical words flowed in an unbroken stream from his lips. I listened entranced; but the striking of a church-clock recalled me to a sense of duty. I saw it was of no use to attempt to break away, so taking advantage of his absorption in his subject, I, with my penknife, quietly severed the button from my coat and decamped. Five hours afterwards, in passing the same garden, on my way home, I heard Coleridge's voice, and on looking in, there he was, with closed eyes—the button in his fingers—and his right hand gracefully waving, just as when I left him. He had never missed me!"

struction out of already existing materials, with its worth or interest dependent on the breadth or intensity of the so-called creative faculty. However, this laying bare through analysis, this stripping of results so that the origin may be seen, militates in no way against the power and charm of synthesis. A builder does not build the less securely or attractively on account of his intimate knowledge of the qualities and peculiarities of his building-materials; and why should a dreamer? for, after all, a man's dreams are verily of the earth earthy, based upon experience and fact. The airiest gossamer has its thread of substance.

To begin with the room itself. It should be of moderate size, not too large, for I have always considered that an extensive apartment of this kind encourages the mind to wander; in smaller space it is more concentrated,

bound down, as it were, to the work it sets itself to accomplish.

The objects around should be in keeping with the frame of mind a man desires to encourage when alone in his study, and should not be numerous. They should be household gods, loved for their beauty or associations; should have their fixed positions allotted them, and be kept there, so that no seeking with the eye should disturb a course of thought. The pictures and busts, the very furniture and its distribution, must be made subservient to the dreams or work of the occupier of the nook.

Concerning the arrangement of the books naught can be said with anything like satisfaction, for nothing has a greater tendency to grow than the library of a book-lover. When Theodore Parker went to Boston, he fitted up the fourth story of his house for a study, by lining the walls with shelves

of the plainest kind without mouldings or ornaments, so as to have every inch of space for books. But the growth commenced. Soon the shelves crept over the door, the windows, and the chimney-pieces, thence into little adjoining rooms, and finally stepped boldly down the stairs, one flight at a time, for three flights, colonizing every room by the way, including the large parlour in the second story, and finally paused only at the dining-room close to the front door. The bathing-room, the closets, the attic apartments were inundated with books. Unbound magazines and pamphlets lay in chests of drawers above stairs; miscellaneous matter was sorted in properly labelled boxes; cupboards and recesses were stuffe full. In the centre of the study floor rose two or three edifices of shelves to receive the surplus which could find no other bestowment. This, it need

not be stated, was an exceptional case ; the magnificent extent of the work planned out by Parker excused, in some measure, this rapid and extensive accumulation.

To one man this would be an ideal habitation ; another would prefer the Bohemianism of the study of the late Richard Hengist Horne. "The room in which the old poet received us," writes E. C. Stedman, "was his library, parlour, workshop, all combined like a student's room in college. Here he lived alone amidst a bewildering collection of household treasures, the relics of years of pilgrimage and song ; old books, old portraits and sketches, some by famous hands and of famous folk ; old MSS. and letters ; musical instruments, swords, pistols, and what not. I remember a portrait of Lucien Bonaparte, and one of Shelley by Mrs. Leigh Hunt. . . . He has a varied assortment of guitars,

each of which has a separate place in his affections, and these, one after the other, he brought out and tested ; guitars of Mexico, of Spain, and one enriched with pearl and ivory, ' fit for an empress,' we said ; and we were right. It had belonged to Eugénie de Montigo, daughter of Spain, and through a romantic series of chances had fallen into old Orion's hands."

Better perhaps than any verbal description, and more favourable to the formation of the ideal nook, would be the careful examination of the pictures of book-corners which are strewn along the pages of *Harper's Monthly* and *The Century* for the last few years, as well as those which illustrate the pleasant papers of *Pen and Pencil Sketches of American Poets and their Homes*. With these delightful scraps before our eyes, we may form our ideal by gathering from each what best suits our individual tastes. Here we

see the spots in which the choicest parts of the quiet home-life of such men as Whittier, Aldrich, Howells, Fields, S. F. Smith, O'Reilly, Oliver Wendell Holmes, R. H. Stoddard, and James Russell Lowell have been spent.

There must be no lack of warmth in the study. In this matter as in others, there is undoubtedly ample room for whims. But an ideal study is a conglomeration of whims. George Sand said, "I have no enthusiasm for Nature which the slightest chill will not instantly destroy." The picture of Shelley asleep, with his head as close to the blazing fire as possible, is familiar to us. Christopher North, however, "never, even in very cold weather, had a fire in his room; nor did it at night, as most apartments do, get heat from gas, which he particularly disliked, remaining faithful to the primitive

candle—a large vulgar tallow, set in a suitable candlestick, composed of ordinary tin, and made after the fashion of what is called a kitchen-candlestick.”

Of a winter's evening the acme of cheer is to have the principal light come to the room from a bright coal-fire—a log of wood, is, however, never out of place ; its smouldering harmonizes with the dreams of the odd moments between work and bed.

But be it winter or summer, every hour spent in his quiet corner should be full of happiness to a man. In summer-time, with sun-blinds partly drawn, and the subdued hum of life somewhere without, he should hug himself in his comfort and say, “There is no time after all like the summer.” And in winter he should still be himself, living his full life during every moment of it ; and leaving behind the things of the past summer, he should

repeat fully and without hypocrisy as he feels, "The winter is my season."

The outlook from the study window should be upon water of some kind. The sky must minister to our pleasure by coming from the far distance, with all its moving shapes and colours, into the foreground of our picture, thus giving us a nearer kinship to its glories and mysteries. And this can be effected only by means of water.

The story of the sea can only be told by those who have lived near it or on it, and only to those whose knowledge has been secured in a similar manner. To but look upon the sea secures the idea of companionship in solitude. Its glassy stillness, its incoming ripple, the wild laughter of its waves as they chase each other up the beach, all find their echoes in the life of the man who has not suffered his soul to be led into captivity. It would be the very fulfilment of the dearest

dreams of a literary man, thus loving the sea, to rise in the morning and to retire to a little room with an outlook over miles of broad ocean. Add to this picture his paper and pens before him on his writing-desk, and a congenial theme filling his wide-awake mind and waiting to be delivered in manuscript, and it is complete.

In default of the ocean, a study-outlook over a tolerably extensive lake is not to be despised. A sheet of water nestling in a hollow between hills does not live with all the throbbing and changeful life of the sea; and for this very reason suits better the mood of the evening, and is more conducive to that quietude of spirit with which the evening is poetically associated. Church-bells ringing on the opposite side, and heard across the water; a bevy of bright-eyed girls, from the old manor-house or the rectory, rowing across the broad

path made by the setting sun on the water ; the solemn and silent descent of the sun behind the hills a little later on—what food for restful solitary thought, or rather, what incitement to that sheer drifting of mind which is very sweet, following in the wake of hours of earnest satisfying work, but which, however, should never steal from work its proper hour and place! It is labour that must be the cause of delight ; dreamy happiness should be indulged in only as a recreation, earned by, and following after, hard work.

One scarcely likes to think of the other alternative, in the way of having water in sight. A babbling stream is only to be contemplated in case of need, and where occasion distinctly forbids a residence by the sea or lake. We are in so many instances children of circumstances, following whither they lead, that it almost

seems like dissatisfaction to enter a protest, however mild, against what many have got to love. But the love of a stream is, after all, a mere narrow affection compared with the throbbing passion for the living sea. It is an attachment altogether too trivial, allied as it is to an open-faced revelation of the very pebbles over which the waters hurry in their haste to get away to the boundless ocean. Yet, after all, the song of a stream and the swish of the angler's rod make sweet music sometimes ; and the settling of their troubles by the rooks in the elms, before making themselves comfortable for the night, is restful, heard in the still air.

A river deep enough to carry a boat answers its purpose sometimes. "I go with my friend," writes Emerson, "to the shore of our little river, and, with one stroke of the paddle, I leave the village politics

and personalities behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight—too bright almost for spotted man to enter without novitiate and probation. We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty; we dip our hands in this painted element; our eyes are bathed in these lights and forms. A holiday, a villeggiatura, a royal revel, the proudest, the most heart-rejoicing festival that valour and beauty, power and taste, ever decked and enjoyed, establishes itself on the instant. These sunset clouds, these delicately emerging stars, with their private and ineffable glances, signify it and proffer it. I am taught the poorness of our invention, the ugliness of towns and palaces. Art and luxury have early learned that they must work as enchantment and sequel to this original beauty. I am over-instructed for my return. Henceforth I shall be hard to please.”

In an ideal study I would have each volume in its fitting place, and surrounded by friends of a like character. A book on political economy has no place alongside of, say, the poems of Drummond or Hawthornden. I must know where my friends are to be found ; and amongst them I would tolerate none of the disorder of a political mob. Shy gentle spirits must not be pushed aside or leaned upon by burly and boisterous self-assertors. If, like Napoleon, I should ever come to need a travelling library, or, like Landor, have to take a journey accompanied by "one servant and one chest of books," my book-friends I should endeavour to secure in duplicate. The scholarly rest of my loved volumes at home must not be disturbed. I would not soil even their clothing by the dust and stain of travel. Their brother volumes, however, if encased in good old leather,

I would gladly permit to accompany me.

And travel I would all the long sunshiny summer, were I but blest with an independent income, small yet sufficient. I would wander as carelessly as did Goldsmith on the continent with his flute. But I am not over-anxious for continental travel, firmly convinced as I am that in this delightful old Britain of ours there are still left corners charming enough to please, and sufficiently numerous to occupy many summers of a contented man's life. My mode of wandering and indifference as to trains should be so arranged as to become additional pleasures, grafts on the original stem. I would perambulate the greenest of English lanes, visit her old-world villages, pass with loving leisure from home to haunt of her famous sons and daughters; and this should be done in nothing more startling than a wooden house on

wheels, lightly constructed, and drawn by a couple of horses. And I would of my own wish meet nothing in the shape of steam beyond the comfortable singing of my kettle. However, upon consideration, the occasional whistle of a distant locomotive—the more distant the better—would not be such a great objection, as by contrast it could be used to enhance the sleepy comfort of my own careless mode of life. But on this subject another idea is given me just now, by the news that Mr. Black the novelist has had built for himself a house-boat capable of being used on the canals of the West of England, and in which he purposes visiting the beautiful scenery and characteristic places through which these run. I must confess that this new idea is worthy as much attention as the other, and promises to prove an equally enjoyable means of spending a summer. But before I fairly embark

in this manner, the whole scheme must be assured against the fate which befell Stockton's "Rudder Grange" number one.

In the meanwhile these things are not for me ; but I am content, having long hugged to my heart the truth hidden in the words of Locke : " Let your will lead whither necessity would drive, and you will always preserve your liberty." And yet who, knowing the world's ways, and acquainted with the charms of rural seclusion, can fail to wish sometimes to sing for himself the " Good-Bye " of Emerson ?—

" Good-bye, proud world ! I'm going home :
Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine.
Long through thy weary crowds I roam ;
A river bark on the ocean brine,
Long I've been tossed like the driven foam ;
But now, proud world ! I'm going home.

" Good-bye to Flattery's fawning face ;
To Grandeur, with his wise grimace ;
To upstart Wealth's averted eye ;
To supple Office, low and high ;
To crowded halls, to court and street ;
To frozen hearts and hasting feet ;

To those who go, and those who come ;
Good-bye, proud world ! I'm going home.

“ I'm going to my own hearth-stone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—
A secret nook in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned ;
Where arches green, the livelong day,
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar feet have never trod,
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

“ O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome,
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools, and the learned clan ;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet ?”

There is no one, I verily believe, however happy his position, or assured his comfort in life, who does not look sometimes outside his actual surroundings with longing eyes. Personally, the alternation of literature with business makes existence on the whole a tolerably endurable one ; and it helps me to understand, though in a lesser degree, the truth of the feeling which prompted Alison in advanced

age to declare: "Either the law or literature singly would, I am persuaded, have ruined my health or terminated my life, but the two together saved both." And yet in my dreams I sometimes find myself far removed from business, and engaged in congenial literary work, in a spot where the wild thyme grows and is visited by the bees, where swallows are skimming about, and the waves plashing below. When one gets to consider the matter rightly, a paradise can be created out of very trifling materials and occasions—employment with the heart in it; long twilight walks; reads in bed; books and flowers; a few friends of kindred spirit to stroll with in the woods or on the seashore; children gamboling in the garden; the songs of birds pouring in through an open window. N. P. Willis has gathered up a deal of the sentiment which lingers

in these dreams of mine in a little poem of his called "Idleness," from which I am tempted to quote :

"The rain is playing its soft pleasant tune
Fitfully on the skylight, and the shade
Of the fast-flying clouds across my book
Passes with gliding change. My merry fire
Sings cheerfully to itself ; my musing cat
Purrs as she wakes from her unquiet sleep,
And looks into my face as if she felt,
Like me, the gentle influence of the rain.
Here have I sat since morn, reading sometimes,
And sometimes listening to the faster fall
Of the large drops, or, rising with the stir
Of an unbidden thought, have walked awhile,
With the slow steps of indolence, my room,
And then sat down composedly again
To my quaint book of olden poetry.

"It is a kind of idleness, I know ;
And I am said to be an idle man,
And it is very true. I love to go
Out in the pleasant sun, and let my eye
Rest on the human faces that go onward
Each with its gay or busy interest :
And then I muse upon their lot, and read
Full many a lesson in their changeful cast,
And so grow kind of heart, as if the sight
Of human beings bred humanity.
And I am better after it, and go
More grateful to my rest, and feel a love
Stirring my heart to every living thing ;
And my low prayer has more humility,
And I sink lightlier to my dreams, and this,
Tis very true, is only idleness !

* * * * *

“ And when the clouds pass suddenly away,
And the blue sky is like a newer world,
And the sweet growing things—forest and
flower,
Humble and beautiful alike—are all
Breathing up odours to the very heaven—
Or, when the frost has yielded to the sun
In the rich autumn, and the filmy mist
Lies like a silver lining on the sky,
And the clear air exhilarates, and life
Simply is luxury,—and when the hush
Of twilight, like a gentle sleep, steals on,
And the birds settle to their nests, and stars
Spring in the upper sky, and there is not
A sound that is not low and musical—
At all these pleasant seasons I go out
With my first impulse guiding me, and take
Wood-path or stream, or slope by hill or vale,
And, in my recklessness of heart, stray on,
Glad with the birds, and silent with the leaves,
And happy with the fair and blessed world—
And this, 'tis true, is only idleness !”

In the midst of all this the thought
of the Reaper with his Sickle comes
sometimes, but in no morbid fashion,
for what is good to live in is also good
enough to die in. That little picture
of George du Maurier's, *Der Tod als
Freund*, with its accompanying lines
of translation from Madame Necker,
almost leads one to look upon death

as a friend. Certainly there, his coming throws nothing out of harmony ; the sunlit sea without and the sweet strains of music within make the quiet room a fitting earthly paradise from which to issue forth to the paradise of dreams. It recalls too, in an unmistakable way, Lockhart's description of the death of Sir Walter Scott : " It was a beautiful day—so warm that every window was wide open—and so perfectly still that the sound of all others most delicious to the ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes."





THE COMPANIONS OF THE BOOKWORM: FRIENDS IN THE FLESH.

I.

THE living companions I would have in my solitude are not many. They must be attracted to me, and I to them, by some bond of sympathy, fine, and delicate, and unworldly. I pen this word "unworldly" after due consideration, for, when harassed by cares of business, as most men are occasionally, my friends should come to me not in my solitude, but during the hours of the day allotted to the struggle of life. After all that can be said, business is but a means to an end; on no account is it to be considered the

end. An inordinate grasping for gold is the pitiable result when some obliquity of vision causes the true idea of life to be seen in any condition other than this.

I am priggish enough to desire that the "Not at home" of the domestic be taken even by friends as the definite word passed from my own lips that I wish not to be disturbed; for how varied are the humours of a man, coming and going as they please, without restraint or governance of any kind! And though at some seasons the heart leaps forth lightly and joyously, dancing for very delight of its own full life, at others it is moody like a sick savage, and will not be comforted, and furthermore does not wish to be comforted. What living friend is wanted at such a time?

I am reckoning just now on my fingers the friends whose faces generally bring peace and sunshine with them.

There is Durant, young and enthusiastic, in life and dreams a poet, by profession a landscape-painter. The sweetest combinations I know of cattle, water, and trees under the varied lights of afternoon and evening are from his pencil ; and yet his father persists in avowing that the education given to his son has "all been thrown away." But the son's most intimate friends know the size of the pinch of salt the old gentleman's statement is to be taken with, and are hopefully looking forward to a transfer to canvas of the dreams they sometimes see in the artist's eyes. His devotion to his art deprives me occasionally of the pleasure of an evening's chat ; but then he generally offers compensation in the shape of a hasty scrawl with some fresh fact or fancy in it. Here is one received not long ago : "If I fail to turn up to-night, 'old fellow,' you will know that I am over

the hills sketching ; and you will also know that I shall creep in on the earliest possible evening to make my apologies in person, and to take out the ‘owing time.’ Those two fellows from the Academy were down with me yesterday, and we passed together your domicile after you had lit up for the night. As we came along we were busy speculating—at least *they* were—as to what one drawn curtain after the other hid from our view. Coming to the corner where your light showed out between the trees, one of them, pointing to it, hit on Wordsworth’s lines :

“ ‘Round the body of that joyless thing
Which sends so far its melancholy light,
Perhaps are seated in domestic ring
A gay society with faces bright,
Conversing, reading, laughing ;—or they sing,
While hearts and voices in the song unite.’ ”

“ ‘You are out in your speculations this time,’ I said ; ‘the light yonder is from the nook of a book-lover.’ ”

“ ‘Then I will venture on a description of it,’ said the other. ‘I will give you the lines of Richard Le Gallienne, which suggested to me the picture I am busy on, of an old bookworm in the midst of his surroundings of “learned dust” ’:—

“ ‘The light of the lamp as softly falls
 As music on weary souls, and around,
 Above and below, not an inch is found
 Uncovered by books, for of course the walls,
 From ceiling to floor, from window to door,
 Are packed with the trophies of many old stalls,
 And vainly you’ll search for table or chair
 Unblessed with its burden of learning to
 bear.
 But one little spot there is that is not
 Thus weighted with tomes—that corner, I mean,
 Defended with folios huge for a screen,
 Not too large a bit that armchair to admit,
 The cosiest armchair that ever was seen.’

“I laughed at him, and said that your nook did not altogether answer to his lines; but I will tell you more about it when we meet. Good-bye.”

I would not, if I could, exclude from my narrow list Charles Whidbourne, whose presence enriches our

half of the globe to the impoverishment of the other. His facts are as round, full, and diversified as are the pranks of another man's imagination. When you get blest with his friendship, gentle readers, and hear his *true* story of the barn-door and the leaky boat, you will not fail to appreciate what I write. Until then you must rest satisfied to know, through me, that he is fraught with the literary spirit of Boston and the adjacent New England villages ; can tell you of Walden Pond, the sluggish Concord River, and the Old Manse ; and, if necessary, correct a faulty description of Emerson's study. What more can be desired of a human being !

Then there is Walter Vincent the novelist, a tall, bearded bachelor, with delicate tastes, yet endowed with a fulness of animal life which occasionally finds vent in a teasy "chaff," in which, however, the

gentleman is never lost sight of. He commenced his literary life with poetry, as most writers do. But his development has been sure. As a change from novel-writing, he pens occasional reviews; and what man is more fitted than he for the work! Rigid as Minos he can be; but he is also "a universal scholar, as clear-conscienced as a saint, and as tenderly impressible as a woman."

All my friends must bear about them a literary flavour, however faint; if they have a delicate appreciation of poetry, so much the better shall I be pleased. They should be bookish to some degree, for otherwise our conversation would be wanting in its finest points, our sympathy slight, and the rush of soul to soul altogether absent. They must know more than the outsides of the volumes they claim acquaintance with, and infinitely more than their catalogue-prices. If

a friend exhibits with reasonable pride; say, a clean uncut copy of “*The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatic Poets. First begun by Mr. Langbain, improv’d and continued down to this Time by a careful Hand*, and given to the public in 1698,” I share his pride with him; but to please me, as I wish to be pleased, he should have knowledge of the curiosities to be found within its covers. Let him know that Sir William D’avenant was “the son of John D’avenant, Vintner of Oxford, in that very House that has now the Sign of the Crown near Carfax; a House much frequented by Shakespear in his frequent journeys to Warwick-shire;” concerning which frequenting, our author says, “whither for the Beautiful Mistress of the House, or the good Wine, I shall not determine”—and that he, the said Sir William D’avenant, wrote several

plays, one of which, *The Law against Lovers*, a Tragi-Comedy, was “taken from two Plays of Shakespear, viz., *Measure for Measure* and *Much ado about Nothing*; the language much amended and polish’d by our Author” —let my would-be friend but know these facts concerning D’avenant, especially that he “amended and polish’d” poor Shakespear’s language, and he establishes my interest in himself, and shall, if only for an evening, share with me the comfort of my study and the companionship of my books.

My friends must pay for their right of admittance to my quiet corner by lending themselves now and then to being bored; and, furthermore, if they humour me in the matter by a pretence of extreme interest, the whole affair has (for me at least) a pleasant issue. When the moon is in a certain quarter, any intruding friend

is set down in a cosy spot, my favourite authors are brought out, one after another, and I tell my listener stories about them and about the men who most loved them. At such a time a dainty extract does not shrink from being read for the ninety-ninth time, provided it has point or pith in it, or both.

And yet, after all, I am not arrogant and unduly assertive. For instance, I never scold a friend for not reading and admiring what I like, as Swift did Pope in the matter of Rabelais. But Swift mistook his path in life. With his fondness for prescriptions of every kind, he should have been a physician. As it was, he would prescribe; for one, mental diet; for another (if he held "open-house" on the Doctor's account), the hours for meals, sleep, exercise, and the other nameless

etceteras of life. And, furthermore, he would insist on the minutest attention to his every whim and fancy.

As I have in this corner of the house my best-loved books only, I permit no borrowers to visit me here. If they are intent on filching knowledge from books not their own, let them roam through the other apartments, in most of which they will find volumes which, "under circumstances," I may lend. Here, I can suffer no "foul gap in the bottom-shelf facing you, like a great eye-tooth knocked out ;" no "slight vacuum in the left-hand case—two shelves from the ceiling—scarcely distinguishable but by the quick eye of a loser." To pass, with the apparently unconscious ease of a youthful poet, to a fresh figure of speech, the preserves here are rigorously watched, and every head of game carries its number round its neck. And, moreover,

my friends, every time I lend a volume, even if it be not particularly loved, I feel a culprit ; for am I not by that very act behaving dishonestly towards the bookseller, whose right it is to sell you what you borrow from me ? “ If a book is worth reading, it is worth buying.”

In the distant past the case was altogether different. Then, a book written and illuminated in a monastery was to be bought only at the price of a royal ransom ; but, in some instances, it could be borrowed from the Scriptorium or of the Lord Abbot. “ On such occasions, a meritorious and gentleman-like monk, (perhaps more than one), one who had travelled, and had done so to happy purpose, was despatched on horseback, or on a mule, or in a litter, in charge of the coveted volume, to the castle of the noble who had borrowed it for the delight of himself and his visitors. When we

say 'borrowed,' we must add that the highly prized volume never went out of its guardian's sight. He exhibited it to the illustrious company, explained the illustrations, and had no end of pleasant details upon text and pictures. If he were a monk who had seen the world, had undergone many experiences, was acute of observation, and could tell good stories of what he had seen, heard, endured and enjoyed, he was made much more of than if his host was entertaining an angel, and was aware of the fact. The monk was made far more comfortable. Story was given him in exchange for story; the ladies put questions to him which awoke his laughter, and there was a chorus to what was thus aroused. The day of his departure was deferred as much as possible, but the stirrup-cup would come at last; and finally, the monk rode away with his book, and with

countless blessings, and with hospitable assurances of hearty welcome whenever he should come that way again." In those days the lending defrauded no one; and the borrowing was not the only part of the transaction attended with pleasure.

Again, I want no man for a friend whose heart is callous enough to suffer him to sell, for any consideration or under any circumstance, a book which has been a companion to him, and from which he has received aught of pleasure or profit. Everyone cannot depend upon replacing the thus-disposed-of volume in the manner of Professor Dowden. The Professor, while writing an essay on Shelley, some years ago, came across a copy of an early edition of the poet's works, on a second-hand book-stall in Dublin. After gleaning from it what information he needed for his work, he succumbed to the offer of a

tempting price for his treasure, and parted with it. Afterwards, he regretted it sorely. But the Fates favoured him in a way not to be depended on, and one day, in a similar fashion, he secured another copy for a small sum; and on one of its pages was written in Shelley's autograph, "To Mary." It is needless to add that Mary was the poet's wife.

A new acquisition which displaces an old friend, except in cases similar to the preceding, cannot always be looked upon favourably. The remembrance of happy hours spent with the lost volume does not linger with the new. The old landmark has been torn up, and part of our life's pleasure gone. And the disposing of a cherished book is the thrusting of a friend out into the world, for no one knows how it may be bandied about in the uncertain weather of

fortune. True, the sun may shine upon it—but even the sunshine might hurt—but then there are the storms of winter and the east winds. A lesson might surely be learnt from the hesitating conduct of the old maiden-lady whose happiness is locked up in her “tabby,” but upon whom is dawning gradually, but surely, the fact that her favourite’s conduct is—— well, not above suspicion. Over her tea she confidently tells her pastor that if she but *knew* that poor Tom (or Mary) would have a comfortable home where he went, she would not mind so very much parting with him. And books are of more value than many Toms or Marys.

II.

THAT book-hunters are not always sinless is a sad fact; and this may be gathered from a friendly conversation

which occurred last winter, in my study, between Vincent, Whidbourne, and myself. The three of us sat late into the night before the cheery fire. We had common tastes in more than one respect ; each of us loved books—and tobacco.

We began by talking of the “shoddiness” of the age, and looked back with longing eyes on the good old days of the past, forgetting that we were only doing what others had done before us ever since the time of Lucretius, down through the days of Dante, and Shakespeare, and Milton, and Shelley. Vincent waxed warm on the subject, becoming for the nonce a veritable pessimist. Between his quick nervous puffs at his pipe, he repeated over and over again Hamlet’s declaration :

“The time is out of joint.”

I suggested quietly that he should finish the couplet, and add :

“O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right !”

For answer, he laid his pipe aside,
and quoted from William Morris's
Earthly Paradise :

“Of heaven and hell I have no power to sing ;
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,
Or hope again for aught that I can say,
The idle singer of an empty day.”

At this, Whidbourne expostulated mildly, but with firmness, suggesting that such a view of the times was by no means helpful to young men just looking out into the world previous to entering on the battle of life. “How,” asked he, “are young men to be encouraged and built up in manliness by contemplating life as void of worthy purpose, and the age as feminine, timorous, and narrow ?”

Anon we talked of book-buyers and booksellers ; but finding that Vincent's pessimism would have vent,

turn it to what channel we might, we let him continue his monologue, after first roundly charging him with having, of late, devoured Schopenhauer wholesale.*

"Why," he began, "what greater sinners on earth can you find than book-collectors?"

But we understood each other; and Whidbourne and I only laughed and bade him continue.

And he did continue, addressing his remarks chiefly to me: "They break almost every commandment; to say the least of it, the Decalogue would be but a poor disjointed arrangement were all the commandments broken by these sinners wiped out of it. They are by virtue of their very calling jealous, envious, and filled with excessive longing. To begin with, they covet, inordinately, their neigh-

* This was, of course, before Weill's revelations of the *joviality* of the pessimistic philosopher.

bour's goods ; and if it be possible to commit fraud in the heart, (and no one seems to doubt it), they are by this token, thieves black and ungrateful.* Why, there is Whidbourne himself, who is not above confessing that his heart is set upon that copy of Pellico's *Francesca da Rimini*, in which is written in Shelley's handwriting the two simple words, " Lady Shelley," and which rests on that shelf yonder. I know well enough that he is bothering his brains within an inch of distraction in trying to find out whether the sea-stained pamphlet was a present from the poet in Italy to his mother at home, or a gift to his wife, for whom he had romantically written the title he hoped she would one day possess. And yet, if the

* " Prince, hear a hopeless bard's appeal ;
Reverse the rules of mine and thine ;
Make it legitimate to steal
The books that never can be mine !"
Andrew Lang.

truth be known, Whidbourne's wish to rob you of that thin volume is simply that he may put it up carefully with his Shelley possessions at home. But I have no doubt he would permit you to visit him and to look at it——* Don't interrupt me, Whidbourne; I must have my say.

"They also commit positive acts of theft. Look at them, morning after morning, at the little corner-stalls, with their noses down upon the print, appropriating by the page the possessions of others.† And

* "As my poor cousin, the bookbinder, now with God, told me most sentimentally, that having purchased a picture of fish at a dead man's sale, his heart ached to see how the widow grieved to part with it, it being her dear husband's favourite; and he almost apologized for his generosity, by saying he could not help telling the widow she was 'welcome to come and look at it'—*e.g.*, at his house—'as often as she pleased.'"—*Charles Lamb to Barron Field.*

† This is not the only mode of benefiting one's self by means of the book-property of others. The following "Lay of the Wily Villain," which appeared in *Book-Lore* for July, 1886, will tell its

then, if in any way disturbed in their angling without a license, they get

own tale—a tale which, by the way, we believe has its foundation in fact :

- “ The furtive sneak who filches from
The bookstall's dingy rows,
Should by the ears be nailed aloft,
Along with kites and crows.
- “ Now, listen, ye who covet books,
But don't know how to buy 'em,
Of one who played much deeper tricks—
But pray don't go and try 'em.
- “ In London's dingiest bookiest street,
Not far off from the Strand,
There dwelt a man who dealt in books,
Short-sighted, wise, and bland.
- “ He had a partner for his help,
Far-seeing, pompous, bluff :
A man whom e'en his enemy
Would never call a muff.
- “ These twain, for want of better names,
Sluther we'll call, and Slyum—
Now, gentle reader, pray don't try :
You can't identify 'em.
- “ This worthy pair a client had,
Who, in his earlier days
Had honest been, but losing tone,
Fell into wicked ways ;
- “ And straying far, and stumbling oft
O'er moral hill and hummock,
He came at last to filch a book
To fill an empty stomach.

themselves home and write tirades
against the flint-heartedness of stall-

- “ And this is how he did the deed :
 (Now, ‘gentle,’ don’t you try it,
 For though he took the book by guile,
 He certainly did buy it ;) ”
- “ He wandered into Sluther’s shop,
 As in the days gone by,
 Where many a goodly tome he’d bought,
 At prices fairly high. ”
- “ And after peering round the shelves,
 As was his wont of yore,
 He chose a volume, small but rare,
 Worth shillings p’r’aps a score ; ”
- “ Then, turning with abstracted air
 To where poor Sluther stood,
 He said, ‘ You’ll put it down to me ; ’
 And Sluther said he would. ”
- “ Their shop was long, and low, and dim,
 The front was ruled by Sluther ;
 While Slyum ‘ kept the books,’ and dwelt
 In darkness at the other. ”
- “ Our villain pushed his wicked way,
 Past connoisseur and gull,
 To where old Slyum kept accounts ;
 For Sluther’s shop was full. ”
- “ And there with conversation bland,
 And specious balderdash,
 He showed the book to Slyum, and—
 He sold it him for cash ! ”
- “ If furtive sneaks, who help themselves
 To books from stalls and boxes,
 Are treated like the kites and crows,
 What should be done with foxes ? ”

E. S.

keepers, who drive away ragged boys who stop for a moment before their wares to momentarily quench their thirst for knowledge. It is a shame and an outrage; and such vile effusions ought not to be tolerated. You recollect how, in the little poem at the end of Lamb's "*Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*," the bookseller is set down as driving the studious lad away with the words :

"You, sir ! you never buy a book,
Therefore in one you shall not look."

"If the truth were but known, I have no doubt the penniless little boy here would turn out to be one of Lamb's grown-up friends, Talfourd or Procter or Wordsworth, who could well afford to buy what he thus with impunity stole. Of course Lamb connects the affair with Martin Burney's younger days ; but Lamb was full of fun. If I kept a book-shop of any

description, I would have displayed in some prominent position the words, 'You may dip, friend, but before you read you must pay.'*

"And in what innumerable ways book-buyers pervert the truth! They bear false witness against the very books they wish to buy. Their memories suit them in a marvellous manner as to the prices of these volumes in catalogues received a week or so ago. With drawn face this is their language: 'Oh, I couldn't give you anything like a sovereign for this book; I have seen it *several* times lately in odd catalogues for a third of the price.' Shame on such liars!

* It is told of one old bookseller of Little Britain that he would never suffer any person whatever to look into a book in his shop; and when asked a reason for it would say: "I suppose you may be a physician or an author, and want some receipt or quotations: if you buy the book I will engage it to be perfect before you leave me, but not after, as I have suffered by leaves being torn out and the books returned, to my very great loss and prejudice."

Shame! Or do they ever give a needy book-vendor an extra shilling for the rare autograph on the title-page of the trifle they "pick up," and which has either escaped the notice of the seller, or is as Greek to his ignorance? Do they ever say: 'My good Mr. Book-seller, this volume is worth double the price you ask for it: here is an extra crown-piece?' Their very solemnity of manner and fixedness of countenance, while securing a bargain, is a lie; for all the while the heart is going pit-a-pat, and visions are thronging the brain.

"Then, if a buyer meets his equal in a seller, and he has to pay out, right and square, for his treasure, the trouble comes out at home. He is conscious—no elasticity of conscience can help him here—that he has paid a good round sum for what his heart was set upon, and yet to his wife he declares that it was 'picked up for a mere trifle.' He calmly furnishes the com-

panion of his life with a whole cluster of lies in half-a-dozen words ; and no one knows better than he that it was not 'picked up,' that it was not secured for a 'mere trifle.'

"Yes, and publishers and book-sellers are sinners as well as book-buyers," continued Vincent ; and though I laughed heartily at him, and called him a Philistine, he went ahead with his monologue. "Only consider how they vary the bait they offer the public in the shape of their book-lists, so that no fish, however tiny, shall escape. I bought not long ago the *History, Opinions, etc., of Isaac Bickerstaff*, and I found 'Mr. Merivale's work on Colonization' at one end, and 'Maunder's Popular Treasuries' at the other. Open Sir James Stephen's *Lectures on the History of France*, and you find an advertisement of Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*. Open Bacon's *Philosophical Works*, and the

most conspicuous page you see is inscribed *Modern Cookery for Private Families*. Try his *Literary and Professional Works*, and you find in letters not less pre-eminently conspicuous, Moore's *National Airs*, and Moore's *Irish Melodies*. Nor are these merely bound up with the volume, so as to admit of being torn out, but pasted on the inside of the cover and made part of it, quite as much as the lettering on the back."*

"But," I said, interrupting him, "you must admit, Vincent, that a great deal of the incongruity of advertisement is a thing of the past. Where now-a-days do you find anything similar to this?" and moving to my books I handed him a battered list of the publications once sold by old Edward Midwinter, who kept shop at the Lookinge Glasse on London

* I found a few days afterwards that my friend had, with his excellent memory, been quoting from Spedding's *Publishers and Authors*.

Bridge. He admitted it was a queer dish, and read aloud the titles for the benefit of Whidbourne:

“ ‘The Lives of Jonathan Wyld, Blueskin, and Shepherd.’

“ ‘The Duty of Women.’

“ ‘The London Bawd.’

“ ‘Ladies’ Religion.’

“ Bunyan’s ‘Vision of the World to Come.’

“ ‘Academy of Compliments.’

“ ‘Accomplished Ladies’ Rich Cabinet.’

“ Aristotle’s ‘Masterpiece.’

“ ‘Artemidorus of Dreams.’

“ ‘Art of Money Catching.’

“ ‘Garden of Love.’

“ ‘Hearts’ Ease.’

“ ‘Hocuspocus.’

“ Hooker’s ‘Poor Doubting Christian.’

“ ‘Ladies’ Delight.’

“ ‘History of Madam St. Phaile.’

“ ‘Oxford Poets—Posie of Godly Prayers.’

“ ‘The Compleate Servant Maid.’

“ ‘Crumbs of Comfort.’

“ ‘Grapes for Saints.’

“ ‘Sinners’ Tears.’ ”

My friends seemed loth to part; even in the hall, over their hats and coats, they were busy at it. Here Whidbourne had his turn.

“Ah,” said he, “that is all very well in its way, that pretty raving of yours

against book-*buyers* and book-*sellers*; but you seem to have forgotten altogether the sins of book-*makers*. There is no such thieving to be found anywhere as in authorship. Just consider the case of your friend Sterne."

Vincent had been listened to with such forbearance during the evening that he could not now but suffer the turning of the tables upon him in this fashion. But with it all he appeared very greatly concerned about his overcoat, the sleeves of which *would* get on the wrong arms.

"Sterne was one of the greatest and most audacious plunderers that ever existed," declared Whidbourne. "He emptied whole pages of musty old Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* into his *Tristram Shandy*, and his blank chapters were a trick taken from Fludd. His sermons are crammed with material from Bishop Hall's *Contemplations*. And yet who can blame him? We

should never have gone delving into Burton for the fun so deliciously served up to us in *Tristram*. The stolen jewelry would never have been seen by many, but for the theft ; and where should we have found anyone who so thoroughly understood the setting of the stones as did Laurence Sterne ? But good-night, good-night ; the catalogue of literary thefts is too long to go on with just now."

The next time my gossiping friends called, they were highly amused at having their attention drawn to a change which had been effected in the arrangement of some of my books. The works of the priggish author of *Tristram* were flanked on one side by Fludd and Bishop Hall, and on the other by a stately old copy of Burton. They termed it, if I remember rightly, "An arrangement in brown and tarnished gold ; subject—the thief detected and secured." They went away,

however, without noticing how flatly pressed against the wall my Chatterton looked, on the same shelf with Sterne, having for his guardian Kersey's *Dictionary of Old Words*, out of which it is maintained Chatterton built up his Rowley.

That same evening Whidbourne had with him a little volume which he showed us, treating it the while tenderly and with great care. After we had looked at it without finding it either beautiful or rare, he said: "This pocket volume of Pope's *Homer*, dog-eared and pencil-marked, is sacred to me in a degree that perhaps not many of your books are to you, Rees. Just a simple story clings to it, the like of which, I doubt not, occurs oftener than many fancy. It belonged to a quiet country lad, who slaved for fourteen hours a day in a provincial drapery shop. His parents were poor, and his life of toil consequently com-

menced early. I think he was but twelve years of age when apprenticed to this business, of which his heart soon grew sick. A silent self-contained boy, he began early to grope about for what scraps of knowledge he could get. This little Homer was bought with the savings of a long twelve-month, and was read in the early light of the morning sun and the late light of the midnight candle. About the time of this purchase there occurred a religious awakening at the little Dissenting place of worship he attended ; and this threw in upon his hopes for the future a bright gleam of sunshine. Ah ! he would become a minister. His thirst for knowledge increased ten-fold. But I must end my story. When he was but nineteen years of age, I, who had been his friend for some six months—I needn't explain how it all came about—was the last to press his hand on earth. His hopes

had been blasted, and his heart broken. He could not think of God as his chapel-friends would have him; but, 'Ah,' he said to me, 'I *know* it is all right.' If there ever was a bright and fearless, yet quiet and hopeful outlook into the other world, he possessed it. This little book I found beneath his pillow, when all was over."

And I felt that Whidbourne had spoken truthfully when he said that the little volume was probably more sacred to him than many of my treasures were to me. It had been hallowed by the touch of struggling, suffering humanity.

III.

WE three friends were together one other evening looking over my collection of Lamb literature. As was natural under such circumstances our conversation was directed to matters pertaining to Elia.

VINCENT. "I have been reading to-day, Rees, of a copy of Talfourd's *Letters of Charles Lamb*, which I should wish to have even in preference to yours here."

MYSELF. "Whose copy was that, pray?"

VINCENT. "Walter Savage Landor's. Now it is in the possession of the writer of the article I have been reading, and which you will find in *Temple Bar* for April, 1872. It is entitled, 'About Charles Lamb,' and is well worth perusal by everybody interested in Elia; and, moreover, it contains ample particulars of Landor's pencil-notes in the said volume, which are curiously characteristic, and, of course, greatly enhance the value of the book."

WHIDBOURNE. "And I have in mind a copy of Procter's *Memoir of Charles Lamb*, which I also would prefer to the one on that shelf."

MYSELF. "Ah, I find there is a conspiracy afoot this evening to make light of my treasures."

WHIDBOURNE. "Not at all; you must admit that even you would lay violent hands, if possible, on the book I refer to—the copy of the *Memoir* sent by Procter to Carlyle, and which was duly acknowledged with expressions of keen interest and satisfaction.*

MYSELF. "The association of the names of Carlyle and Lamb is, I must confess, painful to me, after what has been given to the world in the *Reminiscences* by the former. The expressions 'Insufferable proclivity to gin in poor old Lamb,' and 'talk contemptibly small, indicating wonderful ignorance and shallowness, even when

* "DEAR PROCTER,—I have been reading your book on Charles Lamb, in the solitary silent regions whither I had fled for a few days of dialogue with Mother Earth and her elements; and I have found in your work something so touching, brave, serene, and pious that I cannot but write you one brief word of recognition, which I know you will receive with welcome."

it was serious and good-mannered, which it seldom was, usually ill-mannered (to a degree), screwed into frosty artificialities, ghastly make-believe of wit, in fact more like "diluted insanity" (as I defined it) than anything of real jocosity, humour, or geniality,—these expressions are altogether too much for me, coming even from a man of such greatness as Carlyle. To think of his defining Charles Lamb as an 'emblem of imbecility, bodily and spiritual.' I cannot——"

WHIDBOURNE. "I must candidly say that I myself thought and felt as you do, until I had put in my hands, a little while ago, an account of a paper read by Mr. Alexander Ireland before the Manchester Literary Club, in which he contended that, while writing all this, Carlyle knew only the grotesque side of Lamb's character, and perhaps nothing of the precise

facts of the sad domestic tragedy of the Lamb household, and the brother's subsequent self-sacrifice and noble life-consecration to the sister's well-being. And the remarks you have referred to were written by Carlyle six weeks before Procter's book was published. Moreover, as is now known, Carlyle did not intend that his writings of this kind should be published. But the heaping of abuse on the head of Mr. Froude for giving the *Reminiscences* to the world in the shape he has, is a poor thankless job, and has been carried to a far too great extent already. I will send you across the report I have of Mr. Ireland's view of the matter, which is admirable and ingenious, and, I am sure, will not fail to please you."

Vincent had taken down from a shelf an old illustrated copy of *Robinson Crusoe*, and this proved sufficient to change the direction of our talk.

VINCENT (striking a ludicrous attitude, and remembering Rousseau's words). "Since we must have books, this is one which in my opinion is a most excellent treatise on natural education. This is the first my Emilius shall read ; his whole library shall long consist of this work."

WHIDBOURNE. "And I hope your Emilius will profit by his study as did Talleyrand's wife."

VINCENT. "I fail to recollect that she profited greatly by any reading. Why, her stupidity was so pronounced and noticeable, that Talleyrand himself had to offer as excuse for his marriage the statement that 'A clever wife often compromises her husband, whilst a stupid one only compromises herself.' "

WHIDBOURNE. "And, in the case I refer to, she did compromise herself, and all through *Robinson Crusoe*. It came about in this manner : Talley-

rand had invited Sir George Robinson to dinner, and telling Madame that their guest was a great traveller, and liked to be spoken to concerning his travels, requested her to pay him much attention. This she did by informing him how concerned she had felt when reading of the privations he had undergone, and the shifts he had been put to during his sojourn on the uninhabited island. Her visitor was greatly puzzled; said nothing, but bowed his acknowledgments and thought the more. Presently she asked, with much apparent interest, for news of *cher Vendredi*, that dear faithful man Friday, who had been such a comfort to him. The truth then dawned upon him, and madame was duly informed that a less celebrated personage than Defoe's hero had the honour of being her guest."

VINCENT. "A very good story indeed. Burckhardt used to find

that the surest way of securing the goodwill of the wild Arabs was to translate to them a chapter of Defoe's masterpiece. Surely if Talleyrand had rightly understood his position he would have made this admiration of his wife for Crusoe the means of *her* civilization. By the way, the recollection that the manuscript of *Robinson Crusoe* ran through the whole trade and could find no one to print it (though Defoe was at that time in good repute as an author), until at last one bookseller, more remarkable for his speculative turn than for his discernment, took the matter in hand, and gained a thousand guineas by it—the recollection of this makes me think of publishers as so many anglers; they catch good fish very often, but what escape are sometimes of far finer condition and size."

MYSELF. "But this inability on the part of publishers to judge of the in-

trinsic worth and ultimate success of literary material is by no means rare. Sterne offered his *Tristram Shandy* to a bookseller for fifty pounds, and the offer was refused. Subsequently he went to Robert Dodsley with his manuscript, and neither publisher nor author repented the agreement then entered into. And Dr. Buchan could get no bookseller in Edinburgh or London to give him a hundred pounds for the copyright of his *Domestic Medicine*, although after the work had passed through twenty-five editions, it was disposed of for sixteen hundred pounds."

And thus our conversation proceeded. We spoke of the publishing arrangements of our more modern authors: of Scott, Byron, George Eliot, Longfellow (who retained his copyrights), and a host of others; for gossip of this kind is always interesting, dealing, as it does, with two im-

portant sides of life—day-dreams, and the pounds, shillings, and pence they find in the market. Gradually we got to scanning the cash columns of the account-books of living writers (as if writers ever kept cash-books) ; for be it remembered, this is by no means a difficult matter. Over our morning coffee, we read in the newspaper that Mr. So-and-so, the author of *John and Mary Jones*, had been interviewed on the previous day. With an enviable modesty, the popular writer had shown the cheque just received from his publishers ; and, furthermore, with his accustomed wish to help the world on to a definite knowledge of truth, he had explained in detail how the sum represented by the said cheque was to be invested.

We wondered together whether a “special reporter” ever found out what investment Dr. Beattie made with the fifty guineas he got for his *Essay on Truth*, the result of four years’ labour ;

or Dr. Johnson with the two guineas a week he got for writing the *Rambler*, by which the booksellers cleared above five thousand pounds ; or Gibbon with the six thousand pounds he received for the *Roman Empire*, the labour of a whole life, in which a considerable sum had been expended in the purchase of the extensive library necessary to him in his occupation.

In these bustling days of speculation, it is next to impossible not to think that Dr. Johnson had some tender morsel in the way of an investment in view, when he proposed to a number of booksellers, convened for the purpose, that he should write a *Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*. And what a blow on the head that investment idea of his must have suffered, when one, more remarkable for abruptness of manner than refinement of speech, asked : " Why, Doctor, what the devil do you know of trade and com-

merce?" The reply was, however, worthy a compiler: "Not much, I confess, in the practical line; but I believe I could glean, from different authors of authority on the subject, such materials as would answer the purpose very well."* The Doctor's investment, if indeed he ever thought of it, was not carried into effect, for

* Johnson's mode of work, as well as his ideas on such matters, may be gathered from the following conversation between Dr. Adams and himself during the compilation of the *Dictionary* (not of Trade and Commerce):

"ADAMS. This is a great work, sir; how are you to get all the etymologies?"

"JOHNSON. Why, sir, here is a shelf with Junius, and Skinner, and others; and there is a Welsh gentleman, who has published a collection of Welsh proverbs, who will help me with the Welsh."

"ADAMS. But, sir, how can you do this in three years?"

"JOHNSON. Sir, I have no doubt that I can do it in three years."

"ADAMS. But the French Academy, which consists of forty members, took forty years to compile their dictionary."

"JOHNSON. Sir, thus it is. This is the proportion. Let me see; forty times forty is sixteen hundred. As three to sixteen hundred, so is the proportion of an Englishman to a Frenchman."

his *Trade and Commerce* scheme fell to the ground.

On the evening following this conversation, being alone, I began to consider the matter of publication; having as a basis for my considerations the proposition that authors are as necessary to publishers as publishers are to authors.

The story of the publisher, who visited the residence of a successful author, and, on seeing comfort and elegance on every side, gave vent to a deep-drawn sigh, and observed: "Ah, this is where my money goes," has its parallel in another. An author went to dine with his publisher "once upon a time," but could neither eat nor drink, so filled was he with the idea that all the sumptuous surroundings had been secured by means of the ill-paid work of his brother authors and himself. "The old Roman Emperor with his dish of peacocks' brains was a Christian compared to that

man," he declared afterwards to a friend; "Why, *he* feeds on *men's* brains; and, more's the pity, there is no fear of his succumbing to any evil effects therefrom." See-saw, Marjorie Daw; and so the world wags—Grumble, grumble on every hand.

Horace Walpole tells a droll story of Gibbon, the historian: "One of those booksellers in Paternoster Row, who published things in numbers, went to Gibbon's lodgings in St. James's Street, sent up his name, and was admitted. 'Sir,' said he, 'I am now publishing a history of England, done by several good hands. I understand you have a knack at them there things, and should be glad to give you every reasonable encouragement.' As soon as Gibbon recovered the use of his legs and tongue, which were petrified with surprise, he ran to the bell, and desired his servant to show this encourager of learning downstairs."

And yet another story of a famous author and his publisher: "At the time when Balzac was living in the Rue de Chaillot, three young men, two of whom subsequently became famous in the literary world, went to see him one evening. Balzac sometimes had *caprices* like a *femme de trente ans*. That day he had had his room furnished with white satin. An immense chandelier in the Pompadour style hung from the ceiling. The great writer made his visitors admire this coquettish, and somewhat extravagant boudoir, begging them not to sit down too much on the armchairs and sofas. 'But,' said one of the three friends, 'it is difficult for us to judge of the splendour of your *salon* if you show it us by the light of a single wax candle; let us light the chandelier, and see the effect of your satin then!' 'Be it so,' replied Balzac, and the forty wax-lights were lighted. At this moment

some one knocked at the door. 'It is M. X——, the publisher, who wishes to speak to monsieur,' said the servant. 'A publisher !' exclaimed Balzac, 'and forty wax-lights burning. Show him in. And you,' said he, turning to the three young men, 'lie down on the sofas, stretch yourselves out in the chairs, and do not be afraid of scratching my satin with the leather of your boots.'

"The door opened, and the publisher stood still, dazzled by the light. Balzac, calm and indifferent, asked him what he wanted. The publisher came to solicit the favour of publishing a work of the celebrated novelist. Balzac replied that he was very busy and very tired ; but that In short, he requested the publisher to return next day to conclude the affair, and the latter retired.

"'I owe Providence a pound of candles, at least,' said Balzac, as soon

as X—— was gone. ‘ You understand that this man will think I light forty wax-lights every evening ; and you cannot, for decency’s sake, pay a man who burns forty wax-lights a night, as you would a writer who works by the light of a single lamp. Now put out the chandelier : the trick is played.’ ”





OTHER COMPANIONS OF THE BOOKWORM: DREAMS AND BOOKS.

I.

EACH book finding a resting-place in my "holiest of holies" must be a dear friend. I am a book-lover, but not a dry-as-dust. My volumes should be valuable in themselves as rarities and treasures, as well as for what they contain of wisdom or imagination. I must feel in this affection of mine, the throb of warm human life, the Bohemianism of true book-love. My happiness is to know that the volumes I love have been loved before—have had their baptism of tears before mine fell upon their pages; have been

fondled and made companions of before they shared such treatment at my hand, and made for themselves a place near my heart.

By simply rising from where I now sit, I can lay my hand, gentle readers, on some dozens of volumes, which in themselves as books are mere dry bones ; but the knowledge I possess of their existence, since first put up in their boards, leads me to look upon them no longer as dry information-skeletons : the breath of love, of friendship, of genius, has been poured out upon them, and henceforth they live. Dainty morsels, forsooth, are they for daintiest bookworms to feed upon. The hands and minds through which they have passed have ripened them ; their previous owners, by the marks of love they have left upon them, have consecrated them for all future time ; have made them worthy of welcome to the inner circle

of friends at our heart's fireside. The books enumerated on subsequent pages as forming ideal stuff for a book-collection, I would prize above all merely extra-illustrated works, such as readers will find named in the appendix ; as I would prefer the cosy study-nooks I have already spoken of, to the magnificent libraries of wealthy collectors, which repel by the regularity of bind and the cold, unused, stand-off appearance of their shelf-contents. Give me a quiet corner and a loved book, rather than the stateliness of apartments crammed with volumes "no gentleman's library should be without."

I have nothing very serious to advance against the numerous lists of "The Hundred Best Books" which meet one just now at every corner, except that in some cases they are compiled with such ignorance or one-sidedness as to make them veritable

“false saints, usurpers of true shrines, intruders into the sanctuary, thrusting out the legitimate occupants.” But we need not be scared; they are but the outcome of individual predilections; they pretend not to infallibility; and they serve in some respects their purpose as catalogues of the armour from which a young man may choose what he needs to assist him in hewing out his way in the world. The books I would have in the corner where I linger and dream, “the world forgetting, by the world forgot,” are those to which a man may settle down with feelings of affection, when his way has been carved out, and his hours of leisure come to him sweet as angels’ visits—but oftener. There is just a trifle too much thought expended nowadays on the struggle for position in life, and just a trifle too little of restful thankfulness encouraged for what has been attained,

and may reasonably be enjoyed. It is possible, after all, to hear too much of Longfellow's "Excelsior."

Notwithstanding the wholesome sympathy and warm humanity one occasionally finds in a friend in the flesh, I for my own part must confess that on the whole I prefer living with books to living with men. "One is not always happy with the latter, while books are intelligent companions, without vanity, ill-humour, or caprice, whom one can summon and dismiss just as one pleases."* And for one of varied humours like myself, this summoning and dismissing at will is to be considered an important item. Moreover, through a

* Chesterfield thus describes his companionship of this kind: "I read a great deal, and vary occasionally my dead company. I converse with great folios in the morning, while my head is clearest and my attention strongest: I take up less severe quartos after dinner, and at night I choose the mixed company and amusing chit-chat of octavos and duodecimos. *Je tire parti de tout ce que je puis*: that is my philosophy."

book truly meriting the name, one may steal in upon its author in his most secret and unguarded moments, when God has lifted the veil from off the man's soul, and the attitude of defence, which characterizes the most open-hearted and simple at times, is discarded *in toto* as being an unnecessary exercise—a sheer waste of energy.

And what human friend can ever share the spirit of worship which sometimes descends upon a man as a breath of inspiration? It is only in the silence of solitude that God lays His restraining hand over the mouth of utterance, so that the soul shall sing the sweeter the inner song which delights only the singer and the Author of the song. This mood, which is rare, is assisted occasionally by associations clustering round volumes which at some time or other have helped at the devotions of pious souls.

Is it nothing, think you, my readers, that I should have by my side this little collection of French Catholic books of devotion which I have just taken down from that shelf yonder? The volumes were all printed in the seventeenth century, and, doubtless, since then have been loved and cherished under varied circumstances and by many owners. Look at this little *Lettres Spirituelles du R. P. Barre*, printed at Rome in 1697, with the name and date across the title-page in a delicate handwriting, "Madelene de Berulle, 1730;" or upon this *Le Petit Office du S. Enfant Jésus*, of 1668, with the stains upon its pages, as of tears shed in hours of penitence and prayer. Do these volumes indicate to you nothing of the power of mental association? do they serve no purpose in quickening your imagination? Then is our friendship one of words, and more shallow

than a farce ; for the regions of my dreams are peopled by many creations having birth in (to you) such trivial stuff.

In some instances the past owners of such works come out from the land of dreams and stand before us as historical verities. In May, 1886, the little Prayer Book used by the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots at the time of her death upon the scaffold, was sold at the rooms of Messrs. Sotheby. The prayers are described as the handiwork of some rare fifteenth-century scribe, and are written in Latin on vellum. The pages of the missal are exquisitely illuminated with elegant borders of fruit, flowers, and birds ; they are also decorated with thirty-five miniatures by a Flemish artist, pieces of elaborate workmanship. The little book still rests in the oak boards, covered with silk now much worn, in which it was originally

bound. The possession of this volume is a true holding of one of the landmarks of history.

In the *Mill on the Floss* we all recollect how strongly Maggie Tulliver was influenced by the little book, *De Imitatione Christi*, attributed to Thomas à Kempis ;* but not until recently were

* "At last Maggie's eyes glanced down on the books that lay on the window-shelf, and she half forsook her reverie to turn over listlessly the leaves of the *Portrait Gallery*, but she soon pushed this aside to examine the littlerow of books tied together with string. *Beauties of the Spectator*, *Rasselas*, *Economy of Human Life*, *Gregory's Letters*—she knew the sort of matter that was inside all these ; the *Christian Year*—that seemed to be a hymn-book, and she laid it down again ; but *Thomas à Kempis*—the name had come across her in her reading, and she felt the satisfaction, which every one knows, of getting some ideas to attach to a name that strays solitary in the memory. She took up the little old clumsy book with some curiosity : it had the corners turned down in many places, and some hand, now for ever quiet, had made at certain passages strong pen-and-ink marks, long since browned by time. Maggie turned from leaf to leaf, and read where the quiet hand pointed. . . . 'Know that the love of thyself doth hurt thee more than anything in the world,' etc. . . .

"A strange thrill of awe passed through Maggie while she read, as if she had been wakened in the

we permitted to know what a part that same remarkable work had played in the inner history of George Eliot's own life. After her death her copy of it was found by a friend lying opened on her table by an empty chair.

There are, however, other copies of *De Imitatione* which one would desire to possess. Charles Lamb, writing of the aunt who lived with him in the Temple and afterwards in Little Queen Street, describes her as continually, from morning to night, poring over good books and devotional exercises. "Her favourite volumes were *Thomas à Kempis*, in Stanhope's translation, and a Roman Catholic Prayer-book with the *Matins* and *Complines*

night by a strain of solemn music, telling of beings whose souls had been astir while hers was in stupor. She went on from one brown mark to another, where the quiet hand seemed to point, hardly conscious that she was reading--seeming rather to listen while a low voice said, 'Why dost thou here gaze about, since this is not the place of thy rest?' " etc.

regularly set down—terms which I was at that time too young to understand. She persisted in reading them, although admonished daily concerning their papistical tendency, and went to church every Sabbath, as a good Protestant should do. These were the only books she studied, though I think at one period of her life, she told me, she had read with great satisfaction the *Adventures of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman*."

Carlyle, it will be remembered, sent his mother a copy of the *Imitation of Christ* in February, 1833.

Who would not add to these the copy of this little book which ministered to Gordon in those last dark days of his in Khartoum? as well as the copy which Wolseley carried with him as he pushed forward towards this same imprisoned friend?

A sympathetic associative memory, well stocked, is a source of great plea-

sure to a book-lover ; in his rummaging excursions among book-shops and catalogues he carries, by virtue of this very memory, his ideal library with him. Who would not find an added pleasure in throwing his inkstand at the devil, from the recollection that Luther had tried his “ ’prentice hand ” with a similar projectile on the identical personage ? and what man is sufficiently matter-of-fact to laugh with scorn at the innocent pleasure one gets out of the discovery that some famous character, under circumstances similar to our own, once found comfort and consolation in the very book which has ministered to us ?

II.

THIS little copy (24mo., 1663) of the first edition of the Marquis of Worcester’s *Century of the Names and Scantlings of such Inventions as at present I can call to Mind*, appears to me, when-

ever I look at it, to be crying for its fellow ; and so far, I have been unable to supply its want in this direction. It calls for its elder brother in the shape of the little volume which Solomon de Caus gave to an unappreciating world in 1615, under the title of *Les Raisons des Forces Mouvantes avec diverses Machines tant utiles que puissantes*, considerable portions of which the Marquis embodied in his *Century*. Poor Caus, fired with the enthusiasm of his ideas, so annoyed Cardinal Richelieu by his constant applications to him in the matter of his book, that the Cardinal had him confined as a madman. When the Marquis of Worcester (then Edward Somerset) visited him in the asylum, his keeper described him as a man from whom, were you to “listen to him, you would imagine that with steam you could navigate ships, move carriages; in fact, there is no end to the miracles

which, he insists upon it, could be performed." Another instance, verily, of the truth declared by the man confined in a lunatic asylum, who said, if they found one in the world more clever than themselves, the people, to get rid of him, shut him up and called him mad.

I can never look upon Smollett's *History of England*, stowed away in that odd corner by the fireplace, without remembering the ingenuity of the publisher by which he disposed of twenty thousand copies directly on its publication. He must have been a right shrewd business man to have struck upon his idea of advertisement; and altogether removed from a Puritan in his ideas of the Sabbath to have carried it out. I would that I had a list of the parish clerks to whom his circulars were sent with the accompanying half-crown, with a red cross marked against every one (were there

any ?) who refused the bribe, and refrained from slipping the advertisement into the pews for old men and country maidens to spell over when they should be devoutly engaged in following the words of the clergyman. Anyhow the result justified the venture ; and probably on the following Sabbath those who had read with greatest interest the smuggled announcement, then worshipped with increased zeal to atone for the wasted past.

That stout old folio there, Sir Thomas's North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romaines* (1603), which Shakespeare used so extensively in some of his plays, I have often shaken my finger at in mock solemnity whilst thinking of that other translation (Dacier's), the reading of which gave life and strength to the republican tendencies of most of the leaders of the French

Revolution. I often think of Madame Roland, who became the heroine of republicanism, whilst yet a girl of tender age, in her father's gloomy old house in the Quai des Orfèvres with the *Plutarch* she had discovered in an odd corner of the workshop. Day after day and night after night she banqueted with the heroes of old. On Sundays she took her *Plutarch* as well as her missal to church, and whilst her mother was deeply absorbed in pious exercises and reflections, little Manon Jeanne eagerly devoured the pages she loved so much better than her prayers. And this was the commencement of the education of her, whose *salon* became the rendezvous of the leaders of the Revolution—Mirabeau, Vergniaud, Danton, Buzot, Pétion, Barnave, Brissot, and Robespierre. Ah, Robespierre! by what strange freak of Destiny wert thou doomed to be the means of the destruc-

tion of this remarkable woman, whose portrait has been drawn in these words, "A philosopher at eight, at eleven a religious devotee, at eighteen a sceptic, and at thirty-seven the leader of the greatest political movement of the modern world. A grand woman, a brilliant woman, a woman of fine genius, one of the noblest heroines of history or romance, but far from faultless ; for there was much of prejudice, of envy and uncharitableness in her composition ; her republicanism, however pure, was strongly influenced by hatred of the rich. During the early months of the Revolution none was more implacable, or more rejoiced at the sufferings of the aristocracy. When she was told of the agonies endured by Marie Antoinette, when the crowd broke into the Tuileries, she exclaimed, ' Oh that I had seen her protracted sufferings ! How deeply her pride must have suffered ! ' "

When Napoleon, shortly before he left France for Egypt, drew up a list of the books he would have go with him, *Plutarch* had a prominent place in it. And among the few volumes that serve as companions for Lord Wolseley during any distant expedition, a copy of the *Lives* is always to be found. In Melanchthon's collection, which consisted of four books only, we find *Plutarch* in company with Plato, Pliny, and Ptolemy; and it was from this author, in company with Montaigne and Locke, that Rousseau drew the basis of his ideas in his *Emile*.

In the drawer there beneath where *Plutarch* rests is a small collection of Ballads and Chap-books; but I would willingly exchange the lot for two little volumes which one may read of and hunger after, but never possess. One is the book of old songs and ballads which George Daniel kept specially for Charles Lamb to finger

and dog-ear when he came to visit him, in the same way that a parent gives a child some worthless toy to play with, so that the juvenile but mischievous fingers may be kept off articles of value; for Daniel was a rare book-lover, and delighted in unique copies and good bindings, whilst Lamb liked a volume to have the used and friendly appearance of an old "circulating library" *Tom Jones*, or *Vicar of Wakefield*, loving, the while, to dream of "the thousand thumbs that have turned over their pages with delight; of the lone sempstress, whom they may have cheered (milliner, or harder-working mantua-maker), after her long day's needle-toil, running far into midnight, when she has snatched an hour, ill-spared from sleep, to steep her cares, as in some Lethean cup, in spelling out their enchanting contents." As a fit and personal reply to his own query:

"Who would have them a whit less spoiled?" Lamb writes elsewhere : "If you find the Milton in certain parts dirtied and soiled with a crumb of right Gloucester blacked in the candle (my usual supper), or, peradventure, a stray ash of tobacco wafted into the crevices, look to that passage more particularly ; depend upon it, it contains good matter."

The other volume I would have as the result of my proposed but impossible exchange, is the collection of Ballads and Chap-books which still rests in the library at Abbotsford, and in which was written by Scott in 1810: "This little collection of stall tracts and ballads was formed by me, when a boy, from the baskets of the travelling pedlars. Until put into its present decent binding, it had such charms for the servants, that it was repeatedly, and with difficulty, recovered from their clutches. It contains most

of the pieces that were popular about thirty years since, and I dare say many that could not now be procured for any price."

There are copies of Scott's own works especially worthy possession.

(1) The handsomely bound copy of the Complete Edition, published in America by Ticknor and Fields, and sent by the publishers to Nathaniel Hawthorne, concerning which Julian Hawthorne writes: "Beginning at the beginning, he read all those admirable romances to his children and wife. There was no conceivable entertainment which they would not have postponed in favour of this presentation of Scott through the medium of Hawthorne. I have never since ventured to open the *Waverley Novels*."

(2) The volumes *to hire* which Douglas Jerrold and his father saved their money while living together in poverty just after Douglas had quitted the sea.

(3) The small duodecimo volumes of the American Edition of the *Poems* sent by Washington Irving to Miss Sophia Scott, and which Scott himself acknowledged: "In my hurry," he wrote, "I have not thanked you in Sophia's name for the kind attention which furnished her with the American volumes. I am not quite sure I can add my own, since you have made her acquainted with much more of papa's folly than she would ever otherwise have learned; for I have taken special care they (the children) should never see any of those things during their earlier years."

(4) The *Novels* which Goethe used to read to a group of friends at Weimar. It will be remembered that Goethe had the highest admiration for Scott's artistic truth and skill, and at one of these readings burst forth with the exclamations: "What infinite diligence in the preparatory

studies ! What truth of detail in the execution !”

III.

MAY 31ST.—Resting in the evening twilight, after a busy and bothering day, I have been wondering whether dead authors ever quarrel in the manner of dead sectarians. I once heard a man declare, during a stormy season of Church-Disestablishment meetings, that he liked immensely to live where he did—close to a cemetery—it was so amusing to watch, on moonlight nights, the pitched-battles between the Church-folk and Dissenters, who piously stepped from their graves regularly as the clock struck the midnight hour.

I must remove my *Mosses from an Old Manse*. At present it rests surrounded by odd volumes of Byron and Shelley ; and who can say that these authors may not wake up some

night to "take it out" of Hawthorne on account of that long letter of "P.'s Correspondence"? Just think of Byron showing himself to Hawthorne here in my quiet study, as proof that he did not look older as a result of his "former irregularities of life;" that he did not "wear a brown wig, very luxuriantly curled, and extending down over his forehead;" that he was not "enormously fat"! Think of him vehemently declaring that he has not been reconciled with Lady Byron for the last ten years, nor become concerned about his soul with a piety in which "the rigid tenets of Methodism" combine with "the ultra-doctrines of the Puseyites;" that he is not on the most intimate terms with Southey, and does not wish to "be canonized as a saint in many pulpits of the metropolis and elsewhere."

Shelley is equally anxious that

Hawthorne should understand, once for all, that he is not "reconciled to the Church of England;" never has superintended the "publication of a volume of discourses treating of the poetico-philosophical proofs of Christianity on the basis of the Thirty-nine Articles;" has not "taken orders, and been inducted to a small country living in the gift of the Lord Chancellor;" nor, with the view of producing a poem, entered into a literary partnership with Dr. Reginald Heber, heretofore Bishop of Calcutta, but recently translated to a see in England.

Really all this is alarming, and may not end in words. I *must* remove the *Mosses*.

JULY 7TH.—I have been sitting to-night with a friend in the shape of a volume of poems by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, sent me from beyond the Atlantic. As regards its get up, it is

a treasure for the lover of choice books, with its limp parchment cover, and its title-page in red. As to the delicacy of the literary flavour of its matter I hesitate to speak at length just now, for fear of being unable to stop at the point where loving fancy, having revelled its fill, hands over its subject to the cold fingers of criticism. And there is no room for criticism, chill and icy, in this little work of mine. I wish it to be full of human sympathy, and dreams, and quiet rest.

In the volume I have been reading, *Friar Jerome's Beautiful Book, etc.*, the book-lover will find, as I have found, an attractive picture in the bookish Friar in his quiet old convent almost seven centuries ago, whose dearest wish was to wipe away the memory of a youthful sin by doing some

“Deed of daring, high and pure,
That shall, when I am dead, endure,
A well-spring of perpetual good.

" And straight he thought of those great tomes
 With clamps of gold—the convent's boast—
 How they endured, while kings and realms
 Past into darkness and were lost ;
 How they had stood from age to age,
 Clad in their yellow vellum-mail,
 'Gainst which the Paynim's godless rage,
 The Vandal's fire, could naught avail :
 Though heathen sword-blows fell like hail,
 Though cities ran with Christian blood,
 Imperishable they had stood !
 They did not seem like books to him,
 But Heroes, Martyrs, Saints—themselves
 The things they told of—not mere books
 Ranged grimly on the oaken shelves.

" To those dim alcoves, far withdrawn,
 He turned with measured steps and slow,
 Trimming his lantern as he went ;
 And there, among the shadows, bent
 Above one ponderous folio,
 With whose miraculous text were blent
 Seraphic faces : Angels, crowned
 With rings of melting amethyst ;
 Mute patient Martyrs, cruelly bound
 To blazing fagots ; here and there
 Some bold, serene Evangelist,
 Or Mary in her sunny hair ;
 And here and there from out the words
 A brilliant tropic bird took flight ;
 And through the margins many a vine
 Went wandering—roses, red and white,
 Tulip, wind-flower, and columbine
 Blossomed. To his believing mind
 These things were real, and the wind,
 Blown through the mullioned window, took
 Scent from the lilies in the book.

" " Santa Maria ! " cried Friar Jerome,
 ' Whatever man illumined this,

Though he were steeped heart-deep in sin,
Was worthy of unending bliss,
And no doubt hath it ! Ah ! dear Lord,
Might I so beautify Thy Word !
What sacristan, the convents through,
Transcribes with such precision ? who
Does such initials as I do ?
Lo ! I will gird me to this work,
And save me, ere the one chance slips.
On smooth clean parchment I'll engross
The Prophet's fell Apocalypse ;
And as I write from day to day,
Perchance my sins will pass away ?

“ So Friar Jerome began his Book.
From break of dawn till curfew-chime
He bent above the lengthening page,
Like some rapt poet o'er his rhyme.
He scarcely paused to tell his beads,
Except at night ; and then he lay
And tost, unrestful, on the straw,
Impatient for the coming day—
Working like one who feels, perchance,
That, ere the longed-for goal be won,
Ere Beauty bare her perfect breast,
Black Death may pluck him from the sun.
At intervals the busy brook
Turning the mill-wheel, caught his ear ;
And through the grating of the cell
He saw the honeysuckles peer,
And knew 'twas summer, that the sheep
In fragrant pastures lay asleep,
And felt that, somehow, God was near.
In his green pulpit on the elm,
The robin, abbot of that wood,
Held forth by times ; and Friar Jerome
Listened, and smiled, and understood.

“ While summer wrapt the blissful land
 What joy it was to labour so,
 To see the long-tressed angels grow
 Beneath the cunning of his hand,
 Vignette and tail-piece subtly wrought !”

Then came the spotted fever to the
 town, and

“ From the convent, two and two,
 The Prior chanting at their head,
 The monks went forth to shrive the sick
 And give the hungry grave its dead—
 Only Jerome, he went not forth,
 But hiding in his dusty nook,
 ‘ Let come what will, I must illumine
 The last ten pages of my Book !’
 He drew his stool before the desk,
 And sat him down, distraught and wan,
 To paint his daring masterpiece,
 The stately figure of Saint John.
 He sketched the head with pious care,
 Laid in the tint, when, powers of Grace !
 He found a grinning Death’s-head there,
 And not the grand Apostle’s face !

“ Then up he rose with one long cry :
 ‘ ’Tis Satan’s self does this,’ cried he,
 ‘ Because I shut and barred my heart
 When Thou didst loudest call to me !
 O Lord, Thou know’st the thoughts of men,
 Thou know’st that I did yearn to make
 Thy Word more lovely to the eyes
 Of sinful souls, for Christ His sake !
 Nathless I leave the task undone :
 I give up all to follow thee—
 Even like him who gave his nets
 To waves and winds by Galilee !’

“Which said, he closed the precious Book
In silence, with a reverent hand ;
And drawing his cowl about his face,
Went forth into the stricken land.

* * * * *

“The weeks crept on, when, one still day,
God’s awful presence filled the sky,
And that black vapor floated by,
And lo ! the sickness past away.”

And “Friar Jerome, a wasted shape,”
returned to the convent :

“Counting his rosary step by step,
With a forlorn and vacant air,
Like some unshriven churchyard thing,
The Friar crawled up the mouldy stair
To his damp cell, that he might look
Once more on his beloved Book.

“And there it lay upon the stand,
Open !—he had not left it so.
He grasped it, with a cry ; for, lo !
He saw that some angelic hand,
While he was gone, had finished it !
There ’twas complete, as he had planned ;
There at the end, stood *Finis* writ
And gilded as no man could do—
Not even that pious anchoret,
Bilfrid, the wonderful, nor yet
The miniatore Ethelwold,
Nor Durham’s Bishop, who of old
(England still hoards the priceless leaves)
Did the four gospels all in gold.
And Friar Jerome nor spoke nor stirred,
But with his eyes fixed on that word,
He passed from sin and want and scorn ;

And suddenly the chapel-bells
Rang in the holy Christmas-morn !”

AUG. 24TH.—No prospect of a holiday this year. The sunny days are following each other in rapid succession, but, for me, there has been as yet no waking up of a morning with a look-out upon an absence of three weeks—away anywhere from business, and from books, too—for I am epicurean enough to appreciate the true flavour of my loved authors after a separation of this kind. And so, to-day I have been doing what I could towards getting from a book what I ought to be taking direct from Dame Nature herself—the pleasure of companionship with hill and dale. I have wandered about the old garden, resting here and there from the heat in the shadow of a sycamore, or under the old ivied-wall, and my chosen friend has been Prime’s *I go a Fishing*, a book which,

by the way, is to me no mean substitute for an actual tramp through green lanes. After tea I laid aside this friend, to find another in an old number of *Temple Bar*, in a certain E. Y. (*The World* knows him now), who discourses there of "Summer Days." With pleasant surprise I discovered that the satisfaction I was in the very act of getting from recollections of pleasant holidays was there set down in definite black and white. But my author, I found, had these advantages over me : his happy days had been more varied than mine, had been spent in spots to which I am a stranger, and under circumstances which have never influenced my existence. And so the paper on which I should have penned my dreams of summer days of the past shall contain his recollections :

"Summer days of artist and student life in Germany! grand days these,

full of glorious indolence and *insouciance*, redolent of youth and health and high spirits, and carelessness of the world's opinion. Not very particular about dress then, about the cut of the velvet lounging-coat or the plaid trousers; utterly ignorant of Piver's gloves, or, indeed, of gloves of any kind; very loose about the throat, and not very starched about the behaviour. Mornings passed in lounging from studio to studio; in watching the glorious 'Lenore' grow beneath Lessing's magic pencil; in listening to old Hildebrandt's lectures on art and recollections of bygone *maestri*; in sitting for an atrocious caricature of an 'Englander' (plaid trousers, telescope, Murray's handbook, *bouledogue*, and all complete), sketched by Karl in black and white crayon on the wall of his *atelier*; in unintermittent pipe-smoking everywhere and with all. Afternoons in the blue vine-clad

mountains, or in the thick pine-forests, with two or three chosen companions talking, not the metaphysical stuff which English novelists would fain make pass current as the stock conversation of all German youth, but pleasant quips and cranks, and scandal about our friends, or romance—romance in which, *O mihi præteritos!* we then firmly believed. Then to coffee in some pleasant public garden, where the simple German matrons and *frauleins*, by no means unattractive, with their deep blue eyes, their hands which, instead of ‘offering early flowers,’ bore knitting-needles and stocking-wool, and their masses of light hair, moved pleasantly among us. Then for a swim with the stream in the rapid Rhine, and then the *abends essen*. The supper at the students’ *Kneipe*—the steaming portion of *reh-bok*, the *håring-salad*, the *Bairisch bier*,—the mighty pipes, the

madcap frolics of the *Biirschen*; and the walk homeward in the mellow moonlight, a mob of fantastically-dressed lads, with their arms round each other's necks, with sweetly-attuned voices,

“ ‘ Marching along, fifty score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.’

* * * * *

“ Even now come crowding thick and fast upon me memories of pleasant holidays, which must be massed together, not dilated upon in detail. Summer days at races on breezy downs or sunburnt heaths—at Epsom or at Ascot—where one cared little enough for the names, the weights, or the colours of the riders; the ‘odds,’ and bets, and handicaps, and general knavery; but, oh! how much for the pleasant smell of the trodden turf, the fresh air, the brilliant sunshine! Summer days in broad-bottomed punts, with a pretence of fishing ill-

sustained ; a decided leaning to thorough indolence, and an unremitting attention to the cold fowl and salt in the paper packet, and the iced something in the narrow-mouthed stone jar. Summer days on the beach, passed in alternate dips into the old, well-thumbed green *Tennyson*, and vacant stares at the blue vault of sky and the blue expanse of sea. Summer days on the river, with the boat pulled under the over-hanging trees, while we lay lazily in the stern, now looking at a jumping fish, now listening to the rustic sounds borne upon the balmy air from the shore ; lay

“ ‘ With indolent fingers fretting the tide,
And an indolent arm round a darling waist ;’

as one of our sweet songsters has expressed it. Summer days on blinding Swiss mountains, on verdant-bordered English lakes, on Mediterranean steamers, where one lies under the wetted awning in that happy state

of *kief* and forgetfulness so grateful to the slave of the pen ; under the shadow of the Pyramids, among nestling Rhine villages and amid ruined abbeys."

NOVEMBER 11TH.—I am not expecting any friend to visit me to-night. The wind is making a wild world of it outside ; within, the fire is cheery, the lamp lit, and I am alone, quietly happy in a sense of safety, knowing that this evening will not be laid waste by interruption of any kind. I have taken down from its nook a volume of a hundred years ago, and termed a catalogue,—*Catalogue of Five Hundred Celebrated Authors of Great Britain now Living*, and its title-page bears date 1788. A wonder it seems to me that such a stock of quiet, unconscious humour should have been exhausted on such a publication. The whole thing tickles me amazingly: and as it is the custom with a certain

class of individuals to walk ever with their eyes turned backwards, and to talk unceasingly of the good old days which, they tell you with many a sigh, are gone for ever, it just occurs to me that I might pander a little to this taste and let those of my readers who like, share with me this Mark Twainishness of a century ago. The names of the authors are given in the catalogue in due alphabetical order, and in our extracts we will follow the same rule :

“ANDREWS, Miles Peter. Author of *Kinkvervankotfdarfprakengotchdcerns*, a farce imitated from Lady Craven; *Dissipation*, a comedy, and *Reparation*, a comedy; each of which have taken their station in the regions of mediocrity.

“BLACKLOCK, ———, LL.D. This gentleman, who has been blind from his infancy, first attracted notice by the publication of a volume of poems.

. . . He lives at Edinburgh in habits of intimacy with the most respectable *literati* of that country (*sic*).

"BROCQ, Philip le. A clerical visionary who has published a project for the payment of the National Debt, and for the better cultivation of fir-trees.

"BRUCE, ———. A traveller particularly celebrated for his researches in the kingdom of Abyssinia. He was long restrained from publishing his *Observations* by the laughter he excited in consequence of his account of the Abyssinian oxen. It is, it seems, a custom with the inhabitants to cut a steak from the flank of the animals and devour it raw. The oxen are then turned out to graze, and do very well after the operation. Mr. Bruce's travels are in the press, and may speedily be expected.

"BUNBURY, Henry. It is always pleasing to the compiler of a catalogue like this to have an opportunity

of inserting in it the names of persons of merit who do not seem immediately to fall within his design. Mr. Bunbury, brother to Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, Baronet, late Member of Parliament for the county of Suffolk, is a painter of some merit in the serious line, and of superior eminence in the humorous and the ludicrous Mrs. Bunbury is much admired for her personal charms and her mental accomplishments.

COTTON, Charles, M.D. The proprietor of a private madhouse near St. Albans, and author of *Visions in Verse for the Instruction of Younger Minds*.

"EON, ——— d'. This very extraordinary woman lived more than twenty years in a public station in the disguise and under the character of a man. She was secretary to the French Embassy at London, of the Count de Guerchy, and was instru-

mental in negotiating the peace of Paris in 1763. Her *Letters, Memoirs, and Negotiations* were published in quarto in the year 1764. She also wrote *Mémoire des Finances*, in two volumes duodecimo; *Ses Loisirs en Angleterre*, in fourteen volumes octavo; a *Life of Czarina Eudoxia Focderowna, Consort to Peter the Great*; and a *Letter to the Count de Guerchy*. Her sex at length became a topic for public suspicion, and the speculation of gamesters, and was authentically ascertained in a trial before Lord Mansfield founded upon one of these speculations She is much celebrated for her skill in fencing, tennis, and other manly exercises.

“HORSLEY, Samuel, D.D., F.R.S., Lord Bishop of St. David's. Dr. Horsley married his maidservant, and is the editor of the late edition of Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*.

“HURD, Richard, D.D. Bishop of

Worcester, and Clerk of the Closet to the King. . . . The distinguishing feature of the mind of Bishop Hurd seems to be intellectual cowardice.

“INGLEFIELD, John, a captain in the navy. He published a shilling pamphlet intitled *Narrative of the Loss of the Centaur*; and there have been about half-a-dozen pieces of the same dimensions published in a controversy of some notoriety between him and his wife.

“LOFFT, Capel. A gentleman of the county of Suffolk, an amiable and vigorous champion of the principles of liberty. He has published an *Essay on the Law of Libels*; the *Praises of Poetry*, a poem. . . .

“MAINWARING, ———, a clergyman. He published a volume of sermons, and had a controversy with Dr. Samuel Halifax, Bishop of Gloucester, upon the proper way of quoting passages of Scripture.

"MORE, Hannah, a schoolmistress at Bristol. She published in 1773 *The Search After Happiness*, a pastoral drama in rhyme, written to be performed by her pupils. . . . She has lately been celebrated for her animated patronage, and still more animated quarrel with Mrs. Anne Yearsley, a poetical milkwoman.

"NEWMAN, Henry Charles Christian Theodore, a German by birth, and a clergyman of the Church of England. He published a *Sermon Preached before the Humane Society*, remarkable for rotundity of period and neatness of construction; and a poem on the *Love of our Country*, containing a very animated parallel between the character of Jesus Christ and the Duchess of Devonshire.

"O'KEEFE, John, a native of Ireland, and late a performer upon the Dublin Theatre. He owes his genius as a poet to the accident of having de-

molished his wife's nose in a fit of jealousy. . . . His style is chiefly that of pun, and the happy production of voluble nonsense. . . . Mr. O'Keefe has the misfortune of being deprived of the use of the organs of sight.

"SCOTT, ———, a poetess. Author of a performance entitled *The Female Advocate*, which has had between two and three admirers.

"SHERIDAN, Thomas, the son of Dr. Thomas Sheridan, a schoolmaster of Dublin, and the particular friend of Dr. Jonathan Swift. His publications are . . . *A Discourse on Oratory*, 1759; *Lectures on Elocution*, in one volume quarto; . . . *Lectures on the Art of Reading Prose and Verse*, in two volumes octavo, 1775. . . . In these publications, though they are not destitute of good sense, there is a moderate portion of pedantry and self-conceit. In his preface to the *Art of Reading Prose*, in particular,

Mr. Sheridan observes that the irreligion and scepticism of the present age are owing to the slovenly manner in which our clergy read prayers; that they might hitherto justify their negligence and ignorance by the want of instruction; but that now that his book had been published, if irreligion and scepticism be not banished out of the island, the clergy will remain without excuse.

“SMITH, Charlotte, a lady of the county of Sussex. She produced, in 1784, *Sonnets and other Poems*, which are characterized by great elegance of feeling and beauty of expression. Mrs. Smith is the mother of ten children.

“TASKER, William, a clergyman, and a writer of poetry. He commenced his career about the year 1779; and produced an *Ode to the Warlike Genius of Great Britain*; an *Ode to the Memory of the Bishop of Sodor and Man* . . . Mr. Tasker's

writings are not good prose, because they are tagged with rhymes; and they are not good poetry, because they are cold, insipid, pleonastic, and prosaical.

“TRIMMER, ———, a devout lady who has dedicated her slender talents to the instructing from the press the rising generation. Her works are, *Sacred History* in four volumes duodecimo; and a little *Spelling Book*, price sixpence.

“TYTLER, Alexander, a professor of universal history in the University of Edinburgh. This gentleman distinguished himself with reputation in the controversy in favour of the innocence of Mary Queen of Scots. He also published in 1783 a *Syllabus of his Lectures on Universal History* in one volume octavo; and in 1784 was the first person in these islands who adventured in an air balloon, though for want of being able to afford the expense, he only sailed over two barns and a stable.”

DECEMBER 13TH.—The rain is coming down to-night as if it were making the most of a last opportunity ; and it is evident that no one will call to disturb this evening's quiet. I have just laid aside old Izaak Walton's *Lives* to pursue a train of thought originated by the volume. Ah ! I will pick my companions and go wandering with them in search of stray volumes, which perchance might be secured in spots delightful to linger in. Unseen, I will rub shoulders with my friends in their strolls ; and, prevented by no infirmities of the flesh, I will find my way to their very hearts, and share the secret satisfaction they enjoy from the volumes they handle or purchase ; for next in pleasure to the securing a prize ourselves, is the knowledge that it has been secured by a friend.

Here comes along Bishop Sander-
son, than whom no prelate ever better

loved books; and in him, notwithstanding his sad-coloured clothes, I find a fit companion for the commencement of my mental stroll. Away we go together to Little Britain, the haunt of the learned, and the spot where one seldom fails to find agreeable conversation; for the booksellers here are "knowing and conversable men, with whom, for the sake of bookish knowledge, the greatest wits are ever pleased to converse." But we find no particular call for enticing words, just now, at which I am glad, for the Bishop's powers of conversation are well known,* and he has come to purchase some works of Doctor Richard Sibbes, and not to talk; and moreover the sky is darkening, and the rain not far distant. So the parcel is made up, and we depart together. But it is an afternoon to

* From the double testimony of Izaak Walton and King Charles.

remember. Denied friendly words of seasonable conversation in one direction, the Bishop soon finds them in another. Not many steps away he meets his friend Izaak Walton, with whose company and speech he is evidently gratified, as I gather from the manner they stand together in the street talking on sundry pleasing themes. The Bishop unties his parcel on his knee in a stooping position, and with the pride of a genuine booklover shows "honest Izaak" his latest purchase. But the rain and the wind have come, and, loth to part, the friends find shelter in a "cleanly house," where with plain fare of bread and cheese and ale, and before a good fire, they continue their conversation, and the angler grows eloquent in praise of Doctor Richard Sibbes.*

* "To my son Izaak I give Doctor Sibbes his *Soul's Conflict*, and to my daughter the *Bruised Reed*—desiring them to read them so as to be well acquainted with them."—*Izaak Walton's Will*.

There, at their ease, and with kindly smiles on their faces, I leave them to the ale and the books.

Again I am in Little Britain in search of books, and my companion this time is the Earl of Dorset. He has given his order to the bookseller, who is rummaging about with many expressions of hope of finding. In the meanwhile the Earl takes up a little volume which lies close to his hand, and opens it to find many passages which strike him pleasantly, and fix his attention. Bending over his shoulder I see that the volume is entitled *Paradise Lost*, and its author one John Milton. The bookseller has been successful in his search, and returning to his titled customer is met with inquiries concerning the said *Paradise Lost*, and a request that the volume be included in the parcel of purchases.

With reiterated thanks the book-

seller adds :—" If your lordship can say anything in favour of the book, after reading it, I shall be glad, for the copies lie on hand, like waste-paper."

The Earl of Dorset is again the companion I choose for my third visit to Little Britain; and this time the bookseller's tale about this certain work of one John Milton has a different turn. "The book is inquired about," he says, "and in many instances eagerly bought."

At this the Earl smiles, and confesses that after reading the marvellous poem he had sent it on to Dryden, whose verdict had been: "This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too."

And the worthy bookseller is pleased, and bustles about the shop with increased energy to find what his lordship needs to-day.

And thus the evening glides into night, and night into the young morn-

ing, as I continue my mental search for treasures with the booklovers. I wander about innumerable corners with old Isaac D'Israeli, whose only amusement in London was his ramble among booksellers, and who never entered a club without immediately seeking out its library. I hunt about dusty stalls in the bye-courts and out-of-the-way corners of the Metropolis with Macaulay ; I stroll in his company through the Seven Dials, and listen with him in Whitechapel to the street-singer chanting the English ballad from which he conceived the idea of writing his *Lays of Ancient Rome*. I mount with him rickety ladders to scour top shelves for old quartos and other "rubbish" of bygone days ; and am content to share with him the dust and cobwebs which invariably attend such excursions. And I find that in many queer spots his knowledge of books is known and appreciated, and the book-

seller has but to hold up to his view a volume to receive, in many cases without examination, a "No" or "Put it aside." And then, having secured his prize, he is impatient to get it home ; and pooh-poohing the offer of the seller to send it for him, tucks it under his arm in all its unconcealed shabbiness and walks away.

I find that in these mental excursions I may choose my companions as I will, for has not Gladstone (to come to our own days) often been seen with a huge tome under his arm (a vellum *Homer*, perchance), threading his way from a bookstall? And Beaconsfield occasionally disfigured his well-fitting coat by straining its pockets with a too great bulk of books. And Lord Lytton, if my memory serves me rightly, was not above looking over old book - collections with a view to picking up some volume for a trifle. In one of his novels he speaks

of a certain precious *Horace* secured for a few shillings. Southey would lay aside many other pleasures just to run his eye over an old bookstall. A friend who visited Paris with him refers to his conduct of this kind while there: "During our stay in Paris I believe Southey did not once go to the Louvre; he cared for nothing but the old book-shops;" and he adds: "This is a singular feature in his character."* Southey himself, referring to his tendencies of this kind, pleaded guilty to "a sort of miser-like love of accumulation." "Like those persons who frequent sales, and fill their own houses with useless purchases because they may want them some time or other, so am I," he confessed, "for ever making collections and storing up materials which may not come into use till the Greek kalends. And this I have been doing for five-and-twenty

* Henry Crabb Robinson's *Diary*.

years! It is true that I draw daily upon my hoards, and should be poor without them; but, in prudence, I ought now to be working up these materials rather than adding to so much dead stock."

IV.

IT has been flippantly said that a special Providence protects fools and children. Without flippancy, but reverently, we desire that this same Power may ever preserve all book-lovers from those reverses of fortune which snatch from their hands and hearts the treasures collected sedulously and with care for many years. No story of love and loss is more affecting than that of a man separated from the books which during early manhood had been his companions, and later on his chiefest

consolations. It is veritable sacrilege to drag from a snug library these heart-strings of a book-lover to expose them in their quivering condition on book-stalls or in auction-rooms. Even their transfer to a public collection is a heartless proceeding. Look, for instance, if you can, upon publicly catalogued items similar to the following, without arriving at these conclusions :

" Baxter's <i>Saint's Rest</i> .	28 editions.	{ Dating from early in the 17th century.
" Baxter's <i>Call</i> .	14 editions.	
" Bible.	} All the editions issued.	
" Testament.		
" Psalms.		
" Prayer-book.		
" George Herbert.— <i>Poems</i> .	} All the	
" Lord Herbert of Cherbury.— <i>Poems</i> ."		editions issued.

However unfortunate or wanting in worldly wisdom a book-lover may be, permit him, O creditors, to keep his library. It is blue sky and green fields and fresh air to him; and you would not take these from the

meanest of God's creatures. So long as *Waterley* shall live will it be recollected that when trouble swooped down upon its author his creditors declared, "We will not touch his library;" and only when the name of William Roscoe shall be forgotten will it cease to be remembered that in his day of need this great man found no friends friendly enough to say, "You shall keep your books." His volumes passed under the hammer of the auctioneer, and were dispersed about the country.* It was on this occasion that Roscoe

* "The good people of the vicinity thronged like wreckers to get some part of the noble vessel that had been driven on shore. Did such a scene admit of ludicrous associations, we might imagine something whimsical in this strange irruption into the regions of learning. Pigmies rummaging the armoury of a giant, and contending for the possession of weapons which they could not wield. We might picture to ourselves some knot of speculators, debating with calculating brow over the quaint binding and illuminated margin of an obsolete author; of the air of intense but baffled sagacity with which some successful purchaser attempted to dive into the black-letter bargain he had secured."—Irving's *Sketch Book*.

penned his farewell sonnet, *To my Books* :

“ As one who, destined from his friends to part,
 Regrets his loss, but hopes again erewhile
 To share their converse and enjoy their smile,
And tempers as he may affliction's dart ;

“ Thus, loved associates, chiefs of elder art,
 Teachers of wisdom, who could once beguile,
 My tedious hours, and lighten every toil,
I now resign you ; nor with fainting heart :

“ For pass a few short years, or days, or hours,
 And happier seasons may their dawn unfold ;
 And all your sacred fellowship restore,
When, freed from earth, unlimited its powers,
 Mind shall with mind direct communion hold,
 And kindred spirits meet to part no more.”





THE LOVED BOOKS OF SOME OTHER FOLKS.

THE following volumes could well be added to my library; and yet I would not permit them to displace the copies that rest there at present; they should find comfortable quarters by the side of their brothers already secure in my affections; nay, more than this, they should have full share of my love of this kind.

The copy of Wycherley's *Plain Dealer* purchased by the Countess of Drogheda at Tunbridge Wells. [One day, while Wycherley and a friend, a Mr. Fairbeard, were in a bookseller's shop at Tunbridge Wells,

the Countess of Drogheda, a young, rich, handsome widow, came into the shop and inquired for *The Plain Dealer*.

"Madam," said Wycherley's friend, pushing the author forward, "since you are for the Plain Dealer, there he is for you."

"Yes," added Wycherley, "this lady can bear plain dealing, for she appears to be so accomplished that what would be compliments addressed to others would be plain dealing addressed to her."

"No, truly, sir," replied the countess, not behind in repartee, "I am not without my faults any more than the rest of my sex; and yet I love plain dealing, and am never more fond of it than when it tells me of my faults."

"Then, madam," again interposed the friend, "you and the Plain Dealer seem designed by heaven for each other."

This was the commencement of an acquaintance which ended in matrimony. On the death of his wife, Wycherley was left all her fortune: this, however, proved a curse to him instead of a blessing, for her family disputed the will and gained the day, while the Plain Dealer got consigned to prison for the law expenses, and there remained for seven long years.]

The *Tom Jones* now in the possession of James Russell Lowell, and which was mentioned in the following manner by its happy owner in his address at the unveiling of a memorial bust to the memory of Henry Fielding: "I possess a copy of *Tom Jones*, the margins of which are crowded with the admiring comments of Leigh Hunt, one of the purest-minded men that ever lived, and a critic whose subtlety of discrimination and whose

soundness of judgment, supported as it was on a broad basis of truly liberal scholarship, have hardly yet met with fitting appreciation."

The few books which fed the romance of Lamartine's younger days. [Being ardent, dreamy, poetical, of course he fell in love. The object of his passion was a very pretty girl of his own age, with whom he read *Ossian*, and to whom he wrote Ossianic verses—replied to in the same strain. Under her chamber-window he used to wander in cold winter nights to catch a glimpse of a white hand waved responsive from the casement. One bitter snowy night they met in her father's garden, she descending from her window by means of a ladder which he had brought with him; they seated themselves upon a snow-covered bench, very shy, very embarrassed, when, lo!

before they could utter the tender thoughts that trembled upon their lips, their *tête-à-tête* was suddenly interrupted by the barking of Alphonse's dog, who, unknown to him, had followed his master. This put the lovers to flight. The escapade was discovered, and it was thought desirable that the young man should break the association by a journey to Italy.

Of course he falls in love on his travels : the enchantress this time is a certain fair Graziella. In all his writings there is no more beautiful episode than that (in his *Confidences*) which describes his life upon a lovely Grecian Island, where, amidst the primitive inhabitants, lapped in the soft luxury of the delicious climate, he forgets home, friends, and the artificial world to which he belongs. His days are passed idly floating upon the sunlit waters of the

Mediterranean, or beneath the shadows of the trellised vines—a few books and Graziella for his companions; the nights are spent wandering upon the sea-beat shore, beneath the burning constellations of the southern heavens, his whole soul steeped in the soft love-breathing languor of the perfumed air.

Lamartine is the guest of Graziella's parents, who live in a cottage; and sometimes after dark he reads to them. One night he selects *Paul and Virginia*. They listen to the sweet pathetic story with tear-streaming eyes. Graziella holds the lamp, absorbed, spell-bound, drawing closer and closer to the reader as the interest rises, until her breath fans his cheek. He breaks off in the middle, reserving the catastrophe for the next evening. They entreat, implore him to proceed, but he is inexorable. The following night they gather round him

in eager expectancy. When he comes to the catastrophe, their deep, convulsive sobs fill the hut. The next day they move about solemnly, mournfully, as under the shadow of death.

But Lamartine's mother puts an end to all this. At her instigation a friend comes and almost drags the youth away, leaving Graziella heart-broken and senseless in her mother's arms.

The copies of the *Iliad* which belonged respectively to Paul Louis Courier, Thoreau, and Southey; also Walt Whitman's.

(1) During his campaign in Calabria a pocket *Iliad* was, says Courier, "my society, my sole companion, in the bivouac and the watch."

(2) Thoreau says that during his residence at Walden, nothing was taken from his hut except one small

book, "a volume of Homer, which, perhaps, was improperly gilded."

(3) When Southey took his seat on the top of the Bristol coach for London in the spring of 1795, "with hardly a guinea in his pocket, intending to make a livelihood as best he could by writing criticism for the *Courier*, like Hazlitt, at five shillings a column, or by concocting spicy paragraphs for the *Morning Post*, like Charles Lamb, at sixpence apiece, till, with the co-operation of Coleridge, he could scrape together £200 or £300 by the publication of *Madoc*, to marry a pretty little milliner at Bath," he had, stowed away in his travelling trunk with his other treasures, his well-thumbed Homer.

(4) The books known and loved best by Whitman are the Bible, Homer, and Shakespeare. These, we are told, he used to carry about with him on his loafing expeditions.

The Greek *Pindar* which Leigh Hunt had with him in prison, and which so greatly impressed his gaoler.

[He (the gaoler) looked upon nobody as his superior, speaking even of members of the royal family as persons whom he knew very well, and whom he estimated at no higher rate than became him. One royal duke had lunched in his parlour, and another he had laid under some polite obligation. "They knows me," said he, 'very well, Mister ;—and, Mister, I knows them.'" This concluding sentence he uttered with great particularity and precision. He was not proof, however, against a Greek *Pindar*, which he happened to light upon one day among my books. Its unintelligible character gave him a notion that he had got somebody to deal with who might really know something which he did not. Perhaps the gilt leaves and red mo-

rocco binding had their share in the magic. The upshot was, that he always showed himself anxious to appear well with me, as a clever fellow, treating me with great civility on all occasions but one, when I made him very angry by disappointing him in a money amount. The *Pindar* was a mystery that staggered him. I remember very well, that giving me a long account one day of something connected with his business, he happened to catch with his eye the shelf that contained it, and, whether he saw it or not, abruptly finished by observing, "But, Mister, you knows all these things as well as I do."—Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*.]

The single odd volume of Cotton's translation of Montaigne's *Essays* which remained to Emerson from his father's library. [It lay long neglected, until, after many years,

when I was newly escaped from college, I read the book, and procured the remaining volumes. I remember the delight and wonder in which I lived with it. It seemed to me as if I had myself written the book in some former life, so sincerely it spoke to my thought and experience. It happened, when in Paris, in 1833, that, in the cemetery of Père le Chaise, I came to a tomb of Auguste Collingnon, who died in 1830, aged sixty-eight years, and who, said the monument, "lived to do right, and had formed himself to virtue on the *Essays* of Montaigne." Some years later I became acquainted with an accomplished English poet, John Sterling; and, in prosecuting my correspondence, I found that, from a love of Montaigne, he had made a pilgrimage to his château, still standing near Castellan, in Perigord, and, after two hundred and fifty years, had copied from the walls of his library

the inscriptions which Montaigne had written there. That journal of Mr. Sterling's, published in the *Westminster Review*, Mr. Hazlitt has reprinted in the *Prolegomena* to his edition of the *Essays*. I heard with pleasure that one of the newly-discovered autographs of William Shakespeare was in a copy of Florio's translation of Montaigne. It is the only book which we certainly know to have been in the poet's library. And, oddly enough, the duplicate copy of Florio, which the British Museum purchased with a view of protecting the Shakespeare autograph (as I was informed in the Museum), turned out to have the autograph of Ben Jonson on the fly-leaf. Leigh Hunt relates of Lord Byron that Montaigne was the only great writer of past times whom he read with avowed satisfaction. Other coincidences, not needful to be mentioned here, concurred to make this old Gascon still new and immortal

for me."—Emerson in *Representative Men*.]

Any of Carlyle's *Works* sent by the author to Emerson, especially the "stitched" *Sartor* referred to in the following extract from a letter of Emerson's to James Freeman Clarke: "Miss Peabody has kindly sent me your manuscript piece on Goethe and Carlyle. I have read it with great pleasure and a feeling of gratitude, at the same time with a serious regret that it was not published. I have forgotten what reason you assigned for not printing it; I cannot think of any sufficient one. Is it too late now? Why not change its form a little, and annex to it some account of Carlyle's later pieces, to wit, *Diderot* and *Sartor Resartus*. The last is complete, and he has sent it to me in a stitched pamphlet. Whilst I see its vices (relatively to the reading public) of style, I can-

not but esteem it a noble philosophical poem, reflecting the ideas, institutions, men of this very hour. And it seems to me that it has so much wit and other secondary graces as must strike a class who would not care for its primary merit—that of being a sincere exhortation to seekers of truth.”

The *Sartor Resartus* Stanley took with him to Africa. [You ask me what books I carried with me to take across Africa. I carried a great many—three loads, or about 180 lbs. weight; but as my men lessened in numbers stricken by famine, fighting, and sickness, they were one by one reluctantly thrown away, until finally, when less than 300 miles from the Atlantic, I possessed only the *Bible*, Shakespeare, Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, Norie's *Navigation*, and *Nautical Almanac* for 1877. Poor Shakespeare was afterwards burned by demand of the

foolish people of Zinga. At Bonea, Carlyle, and Norie, and *Nautical Almanac* were pitched away, and I had only the old *Bible* left.—H. M. Stanley, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.]

Emerson's *Nature* sent to Carlyle by the author. [Your little azure-coloured *Nature* gave me true satisfaction. You say it is the first chapter of something greater. I call it rather the foundation and ground-plan on which you may build whatsoever of great and true which has been given you to build. It is the true Apocalypse, this, when the open secret becomes revealed to a man. I rejoice much in the glad serenity of soul with which you look out on this wondrous dwelling-place of yours and mine, with an ear for the eternal melodies, which pipe in the winds round us, and utter themselves forth in all sounds, and sights, and things. . . . In fine, sit

still at Concord with such spirits as you are of, under the blessed skyey influences, with an open sense, with the great book of existence round you; we shall see whether you, too, get not something blessed to read us from it.—*Carlyle to Emerson.*]

Marryat's *Novels* in which Carlyle sought forgetfulness after the destruction of the MS. of the first volume of his *French Revolution*. [Sitting one evening (writes one who knew Carlyle) in the drawing-room of the house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, myself and Carlyle were in conversation upon general subjects, when I remarked :

“ I have heard that the manuscript of *The French Revolution* was destroyed before going to the printer's. Was that so ? ”

“ Ay, ay; it was so.”

“ What did you do under the circumstances ? ”

"For three days and nights I could neither eat nor sleep, but was like a daft man."

"But what did you do at last?"

"Well, I just went away into the country;" and here he burst out in a fit of laughter, and then said, "I did nothing for three months but read Marryat's novels; and, after a serious pause, he remarked, "I set to and wrote it all over again," but, in a melancholy tone, concluded, "I dinna think it's the same. No, I dinna think it's the same."]

The House of the Seven Gables sent by Hawthorne to Washington Irving, who acknowledged the gift in the following words: "Accept my most cordial thanks for the little volume you have had the kindness to send me. I prize it as the right hand of fellowship extended to me by one whose friendship I am proud and

happy to make, and whose writings I have regarded with admiration, as among the very best that have ever issued from the American press."

The little volume of Barry Cornwall's *Poems* which was sent to Hawthorne, accompanied by the letter containing the following extract : "I have ventured to send you a little book of mine, principally because it is a pleasure to me to do so, a little perhaps in the hope of pleasing *you*. Being desirous of drawing closer the acquaintance which I some time ago formed with you, through the medium of Mrs. Butler, afterwards through your books, I can hit upon no better method than this that I have adopted. It is a long way to send such a trifle ; but I foresee that you have more than even the author's good-nature, and will accept graciously my little venture.

"Your two last books have become

very popular here. For my own part, I have read them with great pleasure; and you will not feel displeased, I think, when I tell you that, whilst I was reading your last book (*The House with the Seven Gables*) the turn of the thought or phrase often brought my old friend Charles Lamb to my recollection.

“I entertain the old belief that one may know a good deal of an author (independently of his genius or capacity, I mean) from his works. And if you or Mr. Longfellow should assert that you are not the men that you really *are*, why, I shall turn a deaf ear to the averment, and put you both to the proof.”

The *Book of Martyrs* which caused Hawthorne to speculate in the following uncanny manner as to its history: “At the shop-window of a carpenter and undertaker (at Bath), I saw two or three rows of books, of all sizes,

from folio to duodecimo, and mostly wearing an antique aspect. There was the old folio of Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, and volumes of old sermons, and histories, looking like books that had long been the household literature of families, and which the present owner had got possession of, probably, when he went to measure the dead man for his coffin, and perform the other funeral rites—taking these volumes, perhaps, in part payment for his services."

Tennyson's *Mosses from an Old Manse*. [I had the pleasure not long since of sending to Alfred Tennyson (whom I knew in England) your *Mosses*, as he wanted to see more New England poetry from the pen of the author of *The Scarlet Letter*.—F. G. Tuckerman to Nathaniel Hawthorne, April 4th, 1861.]

The Linnet's Life which George Eliot read over and over again, when but a child of five years of age, and which bears the inscription: "The first book that George Eliot read." "It made me very happy," she wrote, "when I held it in my little hand, and read it over and over again."

The *Gulliver's Travels* and *Don Quixote*, which were carried about by Heine in his boyhood, and read on every possible opportunity.

The *Don Quixote* possessed by the nameless young man, who, walking one day with it in his hand, burst every now and then into fits of immoderate laughter, as the humour of the whole affair seized him, and whose conduct so interested Philip III. that he exclaimed: "Either that young man is mad, or he is reading *Don Quixote*." A queer commentary this

on the generally accepted fact that the immortal author, Cervantes, died of hunger.

The *Vicar of Wakefield* which belonged to Lord Holland. [This little work of Goldsmith's remained unnoticed, and was attacked by the reviews, until Lord Holland, who had been ill, sent to his bookseller for some amusing book: this was sent; and he was so pleased that he spoke of it in the highest terms to a large company who dined with him a few days after. The consequence was that the whole impression was sold off in a few days.—Goodhugh's *Library Manual*.]

Any of the volumes taken to the Castle of Louvestein in the box in which the illustrious Grotius escaped from his captivity.*

* Grotius was imprisoned for life on account of his having taken part in the political disputes which agitated Holland. He was, however, in his captivity allowed books to read, which were transmitted to and from the castle in a box, in which he himself ultimately escaped.

The *Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* which comforted the heart of Louis XVI. in his troubles, in the Temple; and the copy of the same book which Lord Wolseley likes "reading at odd moments."

The *Complete Angler* which Lamb loved as a friend. Concerning the work, he wrote: "It breathes the very spirit of innocence, purity, and simplicity of heart. There are many choice old verses interspersed in it. It would sweeten a man's temper at any time to read it; it would Christianize every discordant angry passion." Lamb was anxious that his friends should also love old Izaak. Writing to Coleridge, under date 10th June, 1796, he says: "I have just been reading a book which I may be too partial to, as it was the delight of my childhood; but I will recommend it to you: it is Izaak Walton's *Com-*

plete Angler. All the scientific part you may omit in reading. The dialogue is very simple, full of pastoral beauties, and will charm you." To this Coleridge apparently neglected to reply; for we find Lamb referring to the matter again in the following October: "Among all your quaint readings, did you ever light upon Walton's *Complete Angler*? I asked you the question once before."

The copy of Richardson's *Pamela* once the property of Lamb. [I do not remember a more whimsical surprise than having been once detected, by a familiar damsel, reclined at my ease upon the grass, on Primrose Hill (her Cythera) reading *Pamela*. There was nothing in the book to make a man seriously ashamed at the exposure; but as she seated herself down by me, and seemed determined to read in company, I could have wished it had

been any other book. We read on very sociably for a few pages; but not finding the author much to her taste she got up and went away. Gentle casuist, I leave it to thee to conjecture, whether the blush (for there was one between us) was the property of the nymph or the swain in this dilemma. From me you shall never get the secret.—*Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading.*]

The copy of the same work which figures in the story once told Sir John Herschell. [The blacksmith of the village (in which the tale-teller resided) had got hold of Richardson's novel *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, and used to read it aloud in the long summer evenings, seated on his anvil, and never failed to have a large and attentive audience. It is a pretty long-winded book, but their patience was fully a match for the author's

prolixity, and they fairly listened to it all. At length, when the happy hour of fortune arrived, which brings the hero and heroine together, and sets them living long and happily according to the most approved rules, the villagers were so delighted as to raise a great shout, and, procuring the church keys, actually set the parish bells ringing.]

The copy of White's *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* which Dr. Scrope Berdmore, then Warden of Merton College, read with such avidity immediately on its publication. Edward Jesse used to relate an anecdote which he received from one of White's nephews. The worthy old Warden, with a keen appreciation of the merits of the book, prophesied concerning its future in these words: "Your uncle has sent into the world a publication with

nothing to call attention to it but an advertisement or two in the newspapers; but depend upon it the time will come when very few who buy books will be without it."

Abraham Lincoln's *Artemus Ward, his Book*. [Calling upon Mr. Lincoln on one of the darkest days in the late war, I was surprised to see upon his mantelpiece a couple of volumes—one a small *Bible*, the other *Artemus Ward, his Book*. "Do you read Artemus Ward?" I asked him. "I don't read anybody else," he announced with a smile on his careworn face; "he is inimitable,"—Edmund Kirke.]

The well-used copy of Montesquieu's *Esprit de Lois*, which Madame de Staël used in her studies when but fifteen years of age, and in the margins of which she wrote her comments after the manner of a tried

reviewer. Also her copies of Rousseau's *Works*. [Madame de Staël's idol was Rousseau, and she worshipped him ardently. The influence of his writings is to be seen in all her works of fiction, and upon his genius she modelled her own.] One would also desire to have that volume of Byron's *Manfred* in which she read on the day before her death, marking at the time some of its finest passages.

Any of the volumes in which John Selden's bookmarks were found. [It appears to have been the habit of this learned man, when disturbed in his studies, to put his spectacles into the book he was busy with as a marker. He must certainly have been a wholesale purchaser of these "other eyes," for when his valuable library, which he bequeathed to the University of Oxford, came to be examined, these

curious markers were found by dozens.*]

Voltaire's favourite volumes. [Voltaire had usually on his table the *Athalie* of Racine, and the *Petit Carême* of Massillon: the tragedies of the one were considered by him the finest model of French verse;

* Lamb's ideas of book-marking are to be found in his correspondence with Coleridge. "A book reads the better," he writes, "which is our own, and has been so long known to us that we know the topography of its blots and dog's-ears, and can trace the dirt in it to having read it at tea with buttered muffins, or over a pipe, which I think is the maximum."

Whenever Young, the poet, came to a striking passage in his reading he folded the leaf, and at his death books were found in his library which had long resisted the power of closing.

When Montaigne got to the end of a volume which he considered unworthy to be re-read, it was his custom to jot down in it the time he had read it, as well as his considerations as to its worth.

Voltaire's practice was to note in the books he read, whatever of censure or approbation they deserved. A friend of his used to complain that the works he lent him were returned always *disfigured* by his remarks.

the sermons of the other, of French prose.]

Malherbe's *Horace*. [Malherbe, the father of French poetry, had one favourite author, and that was *Horace*. He laid him on his pillow, took him to the fields, called him his breviary.]

The books read by Frederick William Robertson of Brighton, when, expecting that his youthful dreams were to be fulfilled, he looked to receive a commission in the army and be sent to India. [He would have thought it a sin against truthfulness of character if he had adopted a career without a special training for his work. With this purpose he studied the early history and geography of India, and the characters of its various populations. He mapped the campaigns, and made himself master of the strategical movements

of the British generals in that country. The fortunes of India, and the constitution which the English had elaborated for their large dependency, became familiar to him.—*Life and Letters of F. W. Robertson.*]

The *Bible* from which John Knox's wife read to him in his last hours. [His wife sat by him with the *Bible* open on her knees. He desired her to read the fifteenth of the first of Corinthians. "Is not that a beautiful chapter?" he asked; and then added, "Now, for the last time, I commend my spirit, soul, and body into Thy hands, O Lord."]





APPENDIX.

A WRITER in the *Quarterly Review* for June, 1844, after lamenting the miserable paltriness of the work of the several "Pictorials" issued in his time, goes on to say :

"Five lustres since, and 'Illustration' had a quite different meaning from that which it now obtains. A book was then called 'Illustrated' which was crammed, like a candidate for honours, with all that related to all that the book contained. To this end, every portrait, in every state—etching, proof 'before letters,' finished proof, and reverses—of every person, every view of every place, was if possible procured ; and where engravings did not exist, drawings were made,

until the artist's skill and the collector's purse were alike exhausted. The germ of this system of illustration existed as early as the time of Charles I. The pious but ascetic Nicholas Ferrar had bought, says Dr. Peckard,* during his travels on the Continent,

“ ‘A very great number of prints engraved by the best masters of that time, all relative to historical passages of the Old and New Testaments : indeed, he let nothing of this sort that was valuable escape him.’ ”

“ These prints Ferrar employed in ornamenting various compilations from the Scriptures ; amongst others,

“ ‘He composed a full harmony, or concordance, of the four Evangelists, adorned with many beautiful pictures, which required more than a year for the composition, and was divided into 150 heads or chapters.’ ”

“ The history of this ‘illustrated’ book, the first we believe of its kind, is curious :

“ ‘In May, 1633, his Majesty set out upon his journey to Scotland, and in his progress he stepped a little out of his road to view Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire, which by the common people

* “ In Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, ed. 1839, vol. iv., p. 189.”

was called *the Protestant Nunnery*.^{*} The family having notice, met his Majesty at the extremity of the parish, at a place called from this event the King's Close, and, in the form of their solemn processions, conducted him to their church, which he viewed with great pleasure. He inquired into, and was informed of the particulars of their public and domestic economy; but it does not appear that at this time he made any considerable stay. The following summer his Majesty and the Queen passed two nights at Aphorpe in Northamptonshire, the seat of Mildmay Fane, Earl of Westmoreland. From thence he sent one of his gentlemen to *intreat* (his Majesty's own word) a sight of *The Concorlance*, which, he had heard, was sometime since done at Gidding, with assurance that in a few days, when he had perused it, he would send it back again. Mr. N. Ferrar was then in London, and the family made some little demur, not thinking it worthy to be put into his Majesty's hands, but at length they delivered it to the messenger. But it was not returned in a few days, or weeks: some months were elapsed when the gentleman brought it back from the King, who was then at London. He said he had many things to deliver to the family from his master: first, to yield the King's hearty thanks to them all for the sight of the book, which passed the report he had heard of it; then to signify his approbation of it in all respects; next, to excuse him in two points, the first for not returning it so soon as he had promised, the other, for that he had in many places of the margin written notes in it with his own hand; and "(which I know will please you)," said the gentleman, "you will find an instance of my master's humility in one of the margins."

^{*} See also *John Inglesant*.

The place I mean is where he had written something with his own hand, and then put it out again, acknowledging that he was mistaken in that particular." Certainly this was an act of great humility in the King, and worthy to be noted ; and the book itself is much graced by it. The gentleman further told them that the King took such delight in it, that he passed some part of every day in perusing it. And lastly, he said, "to show you how true this is, and that what I have declared is no court compliment, I am expressly commanded by my master earnestly to request of you, Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, and of the young ladies, that you would make him one of these books for his own use ; and if you will please to undertake it, his Majesty says you will do him a most acceptable service."

"Mr. Ferrar and the young ladies returned their most humble duty, and immediately set about what the King desired. In about a year's time it was finished, and it was sent to London to be presented to his Majesty by Dr. Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Dr. Cosins, one of the King's chaplains. This book was bound entirely by Mary Collet (one of Mr. Ferrar's nieces), all wrought in gold, in a new and most elegant fashion. The King, after long and serious looking it over, said, "This is indeed a most valuable work, and in many respects worthy to be presented to the greatest prince upon earth, for the matter it contains is the richest of all treasures. The laborious composure of it into this excellent form of an harmony, the judicious contrivance of the method, the curious workmanship in so neatly cutting out and disposing the text, the nice laying of these costly pictures, and the exquisite art expressed in the binding, are, I really think, not to be equalled. I must acknowledge myself to be

greatly indebted to the family for this jewel, and whatever is in my power, I shall at any time be ready to do for any of them.”

“King Charles’s statues, pictures, jewels, and curiosities were sold and dispersed by the regicide powers; from this fate, happily, the royal collection of manuscripts and books was preserved; neither was it, like the archiepiscopal library at Lambeth, doled out, piecemeal, to Hugh Peters and his brother fanatics. This good service was mainly owing to Bulstrode Whitelocke.* When the British Museum was founded, King George II. presented to it the whole of the royal library; and Ferrar’s Concordance, with another similarly-illustrated compilation by him, is there preserved in safety. The Rev. Thomas Bowdler

* “‘Jan. 18, 1647. The manuscripts and books in Whitehall, because of soldiers being there, were ordered to be removed to St. James’s House, and placed there, which I furthered in order to the preservation of those rare monuments of learning and antiquity which were in that library.’—*Memo-rials*, p. 288, ed. 1732.”

of Sydenham, the representative of the last baronet of the Cotton family, the founders of the Cottonian Library, possesses another of the Ferrar volumes. Of those which were presented by Ferrar to George Herbert and Dr. Jackson no record remains.

“ The system of which we now speak was not fully developed until the publication of Granger’s *Biographical History of England*. Something may be said in favour of those who, with gentle dulness and patient industry, haunted the printsellers’ shops to collect all the engraved portraits which Granger had enumerated. There is a charm in the human face divine, although it must needs be powerful to call forth—as it does—twenty, or thirty, or fifty guineas from a collector’s pocket for a coarsely executed cut of some Meg Merrilies, some Tom of Bedlam, or some condemned criminal, of which the only value is being

‘mentioned by Granger.’ However, the dross is always the dearest portion of a collector’s treasure, be it in books or prints. Strutt’s *Dictionary of Engravers*, to be completely ‘illustrated’ in a collector’s eyes, should contain every work of every engraver mentioned in it (Hollar alone would cost £10,000, could a set of his works be procured): yet this has been attempted, and so has Rees’ *Cyclopædia*! The copy of Pennant’s *History of London* which was bequeathed to the British Museum by Mr. Crowle cost that gentleman £7,000; and the ‘Illustrated’ Clarendon and Burnet, formed by the late Mr. Sutherland, of Gower Street, and continued by his widow, who has munificently presented it to the Bodleian Library, cost upwards of £12,000. This, perhaps the richest ‘pictorial’ history which exists, or is likely to exist, deserves more than a passing notice. It contains nearly

nineteen thousand prints and drawings: there are seven hundred and thirty-one portraits of Charles I., five hundred and eighteen of Charles II., three hundred and fifty-two of Cromwell, two hundred and seventy-three of James II., and four hundred and twenty of William III. The collection fills sixty-seven large volumes. Forty years were spent in this pursuit. The Catalogue of the 'Illustrations,' of which a few copies only were printed for distribution as presents by Mrs. Sutherland, fills two large quarto volumes. In mere numbers, however, Mr. Sutherland was surpassed by the foreign ecclesiastic who is said to have amassed twelve thousand 'portraits' of the Virgin Mary! We know of copies of Byron's works, and Scott's works, each 'illustrated' with many thousands of prints and drawings, and each increasing almost daily.

"The venerable bibliopole and bib-

liographer, M. Brunet, says, in his *Manuel du Libraire*, art. Strutt, of a copy of the Dictionary formerly belonging to Messrs. Longman, and valued by them at £2,000 :

“ ‘ Cette manie de faire des livres précieux me rappelle la réponse que me fit un capitaliste à qui je montrais un volume d’une valeur considérable. “ Tenez ! ” me dit-il froidement, en me présentant un portefeuille rempli de billets de banque, “ voilà un volume encore plus précieux que le vôtre. ” Ce mot me paraît sans réplique, et je ne crois pas qu’il y ait dans les trois royaumes de la Grande Bretagne un curieux qui pût montrer une *illustrated copie* plus précieuse qu’un pareil portefeuille. Au surplus, ne disputons pas des goûts, mais croyons que celui de l’amateur de billets de banque serait celui de bien des gens. ’ ”

“ This system of ‘ illustration ’ has, however, had its day : it required time, money, and, moreover, knowledge and taste. Illustrations are now wanted ready-made for the million. . . .

“ Of a very different nature from the books which we have just mentioned is that which, under the auspices, and chiefly at the expense of

the French Government, is undertaken by the Comte Auguste de Bastard, brother of the late Comte de Bastard, a President of the Cour de Cassation, and Vice-President of the Chambre des Pairs de France. We ourselves have seen this splendid work—the *Peintures et Ornaments des Manuscrits*—but it is probable that many of our readers will never have the like advantage, for we believe that there are not two copies in England of this costly book. *Costly* we may, indeed, well call it, for the seventeen livraisons of the first of the three sections into which the *Partie Française* alone is divided, are published at the price of 1,800 francs, or seventy-two sterling pounds, each—so that this first portion, only forming, at the most, three volumes ‘grand in folio Jésus’ (who but Frenchmen would ever so profane the name?), will cost 30,600 francs, or £1,226 sterling (we

have Count Bastard's handwriting now before us), being at the rate of £10 and upwards for each coloured plate! The *Partie Française* is to consist of three sections, which, if of equal size, will amount to £3,678! The conditions of subscription mention that 'à partir du 1^{er} Juillet, 1840, il paraîtra, chaque année, de quatre à six livraisons, qui seront payées, argent comptant, à Paris, au domicile de l'éditeur, rue Saint Dominique, No. 93, Faubourg St. Germain. Comme garantie du travail, les planches portent tous ces mots, *Le Comte Auguste de Bastard direxit*, et un timbre sec aux armes de l'éditeur.' We fear that neither our announcement, nor the Count's guarantee, will procure him many subscribers. Of the great accuracy as well as unrivalled splendour of this book there can be no doubt; nor would we insinuate anything tending to depreciate its

high merits as a work of art, or 'illustrated book,' but we openly express our opinion that the vast cost is not compensated by the result obtained. MSS. themselves would be as accessible as this book, which would represent only a small portion of a few. If Count Auguste de Bastard's work should comprise only two other parts of equal extent with the French, the cost of a single copy will be upwards of *eleven thousand pounds!* a sum which, if well managed, would produce an entire edition of a work of high character and great beauty. The *Antiquities of Mexico*, a magnificent work put forth at the sole expense of a young Irish nobleman, the late Viscount Kingsborough, cost his lordship, we believe, about £30,000; but for this sum a whole edition of a book in seven volumes in large folio, with very numerous coloured plates, was obtained, and, in relation to its bulk

and necessary price, copies were extensively circulated.* However, be the cost of the Count's work what it may, the French Government cannot be taxed with want of liberality, for it has subscribed for sixty copies (including that of the editor, and the four required by the 'Copyright Act' of France), out of the one hundred copies printed. This subscription, for the first section of the first part alone, amounts to £73,560, or, for the *Partie Française*, to £220,680, and, should the whole be completed, on the least proposed scale, to £668,040, or, in francs, to 16,032,960! Of this enormous sum, we believe that the French Chambers have already paid no little portion. At this rate 'Illustrated

* Of this splendid book two copies were printed on vellum, which when illuminated and bound, were estimated to cost £2,000 each. Lord Kingsborough presented one to the British Museum, the second to the Bodleian Library.

Books' become of great national importance, and the length of our notice of the Count's work is amply justified."



*By the same Author, and uniform with the
present Volume,*

THE PLEASURES OF A BOOK-WORM.



OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

SPECTATOR.—“The little work of Mr. Rees is written in a somewhat different spirit from Mr. Harrison’s (*Choice of Books*), and those who wish to see all that can be said for and against the reading of books for their intrinsic merits alone cannot do better than read the two works in conjunction. While Mr. Rees is so far at one with Mr. Harrison as to admit that the works of great men ‘best fit him for everyday existence, giving him health and strength to live his life and do his work,’ his deepest love is reserved for rare and out-of-the-way volumes, which are endeared to him by some special association, and over whose pages he can linger and dream, ‘the world forgetting, by the world forgot.’ Mr. Rees certainly states excellent reasons for his preference, and we think that every true book-lover will sympathize rather with him than with Mr. Harrison. His dainty little book contains six essays in all, bearing more or less relation to the pleasures of the book-worm. . . . The essays are genial and chatty.”

PUBLIC OPINION.—“The Author adopts a most charming style in relating his experiences, at once original and taking ; indeed so much so that there is little doubt this work will be largely read. . . . Mr. Rees may be congratulated in all sincerity for his admirable book, which is brimming over with sound literary merit.”

ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.—“Bright glimpses of home-life in connection with books. . . . The

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

Author's desultory talk about the books he loves is alluring enough to induce a sympathetic reviewer to talk also."

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